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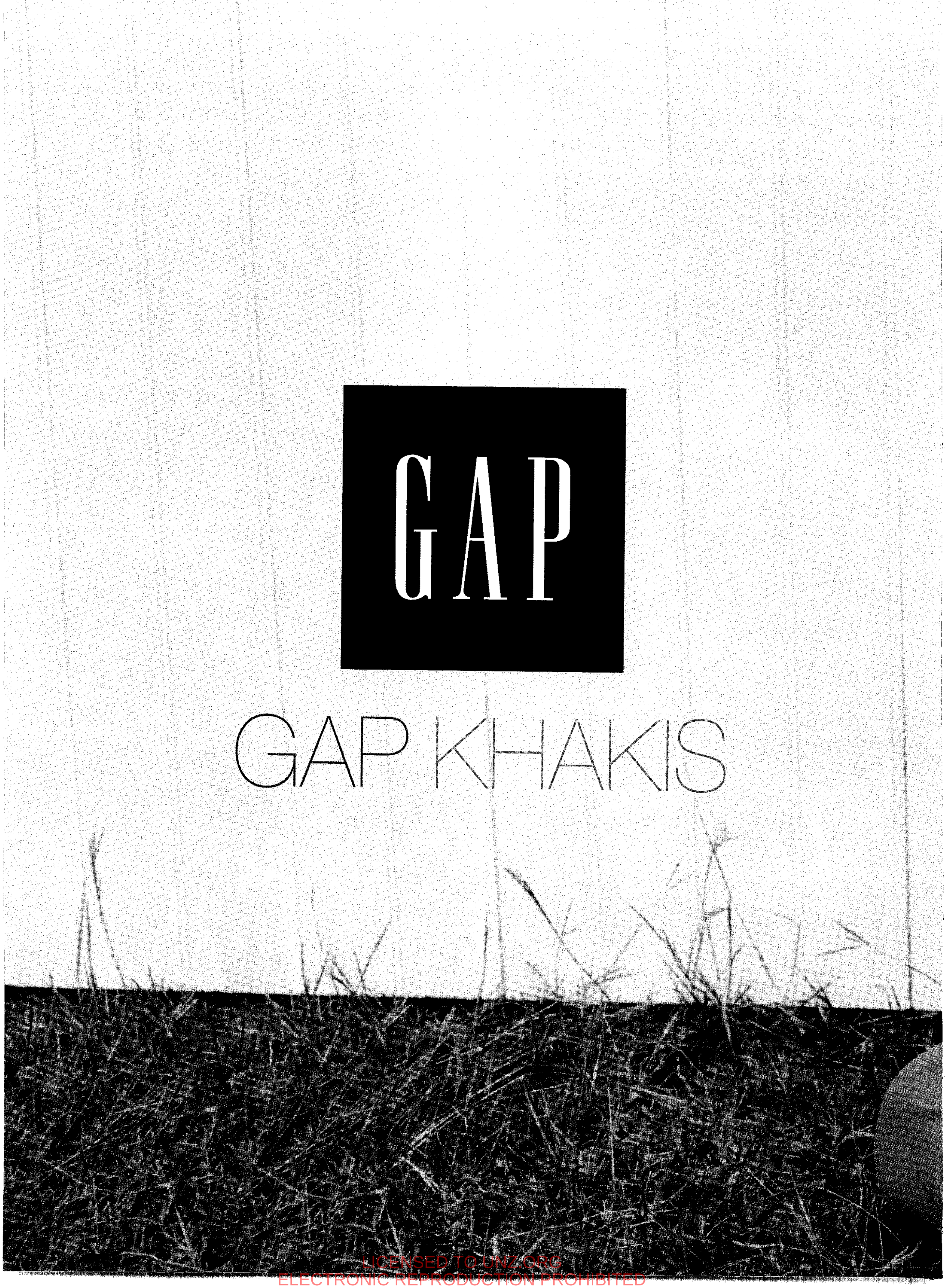
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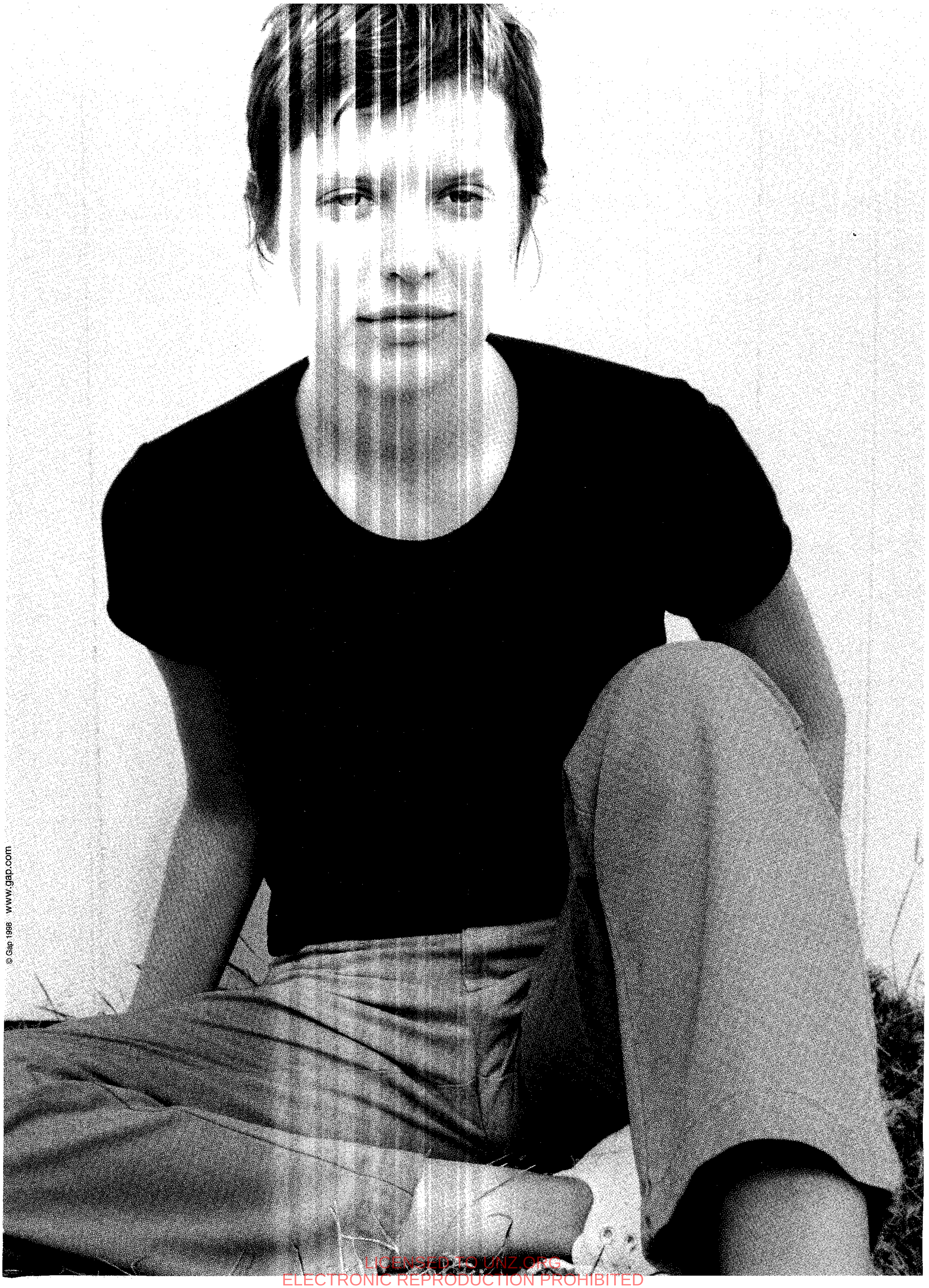
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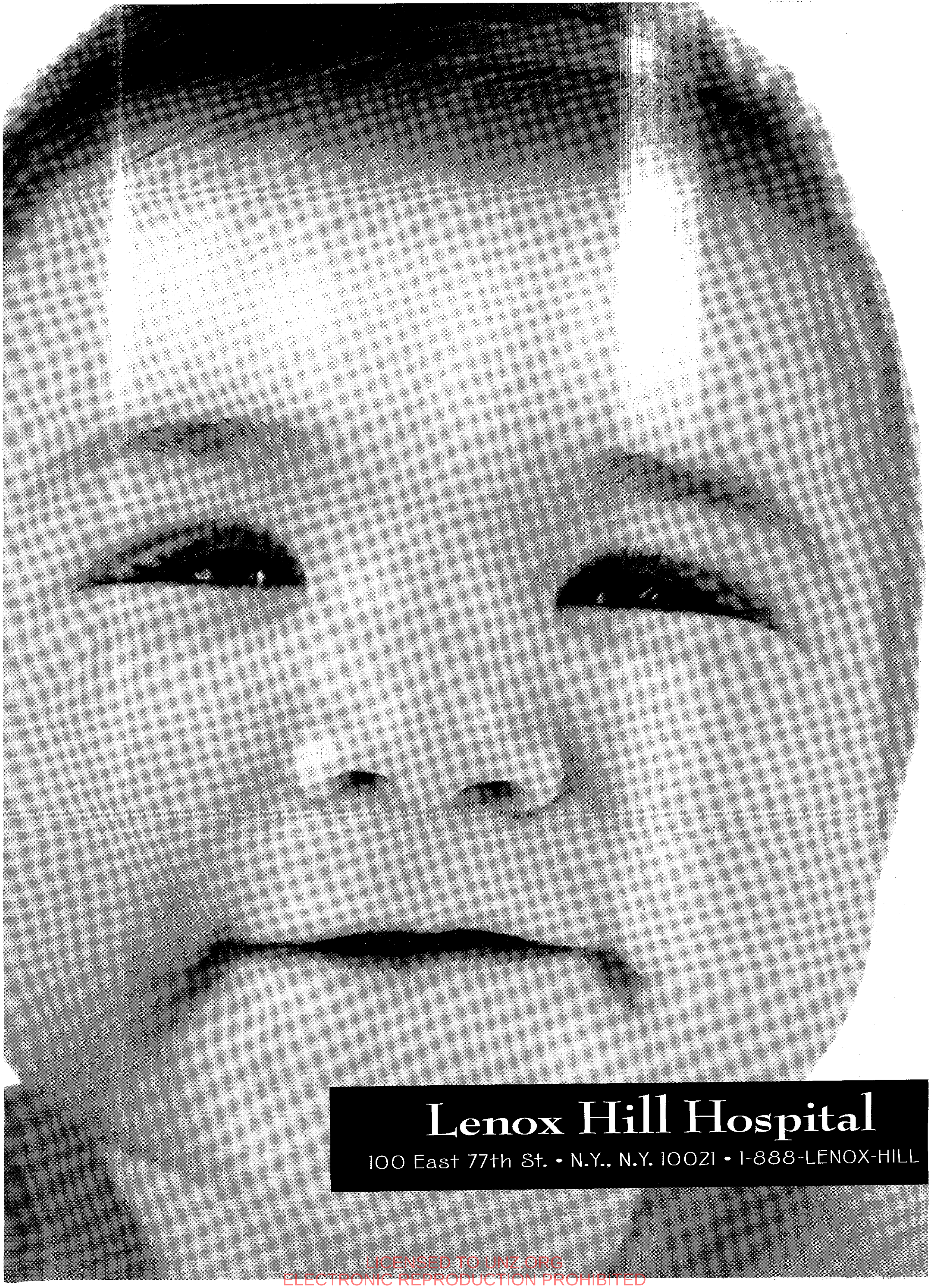

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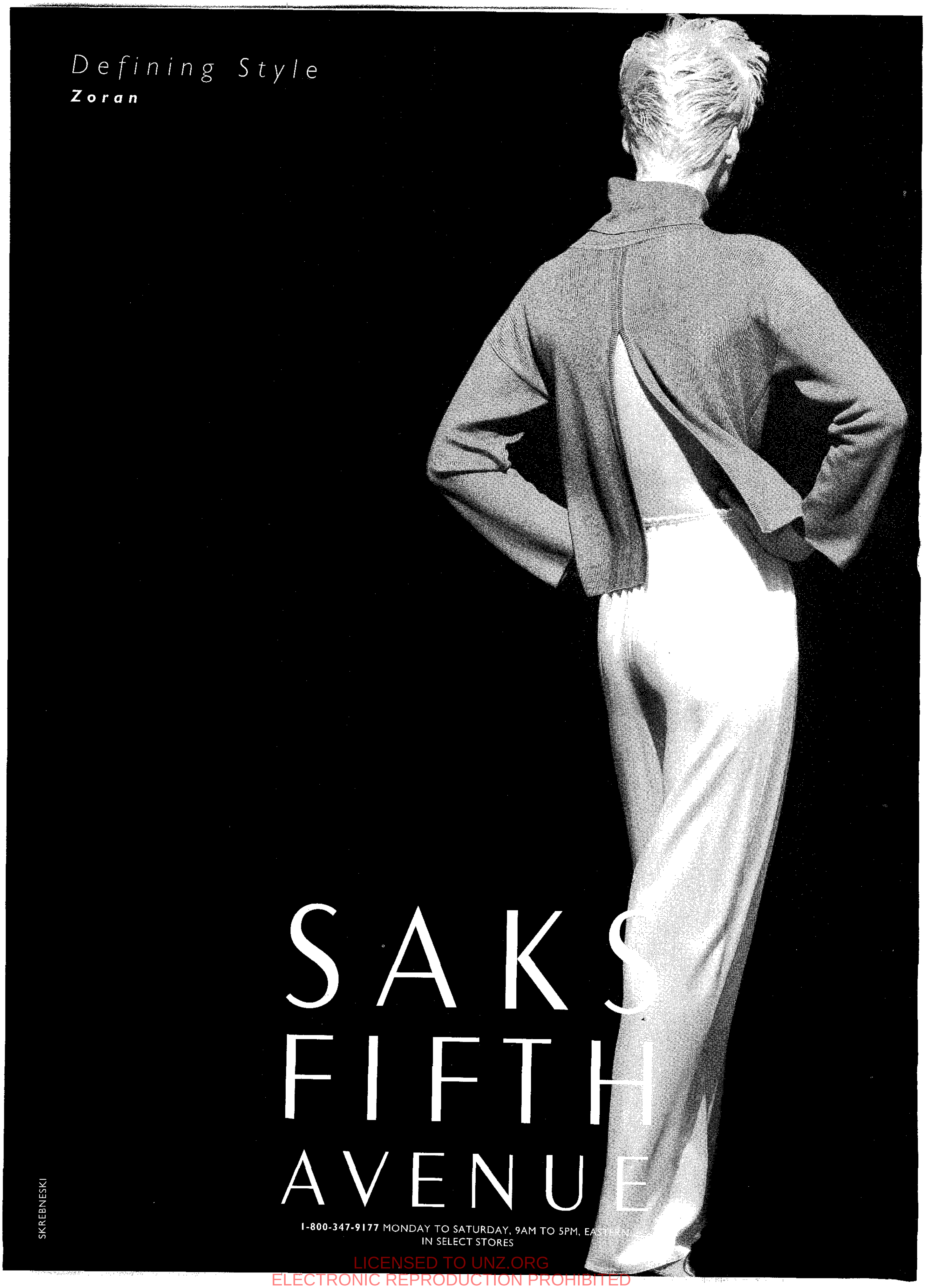

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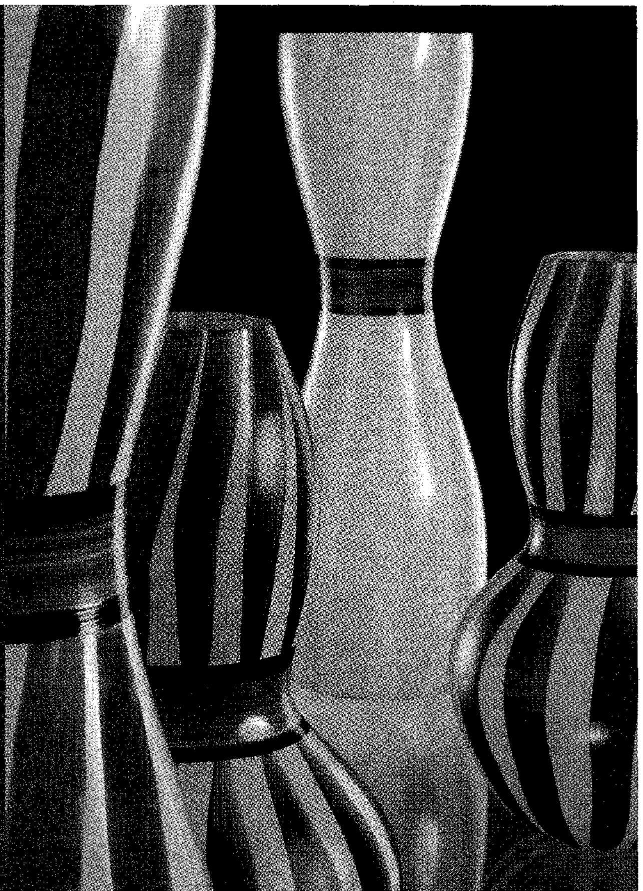

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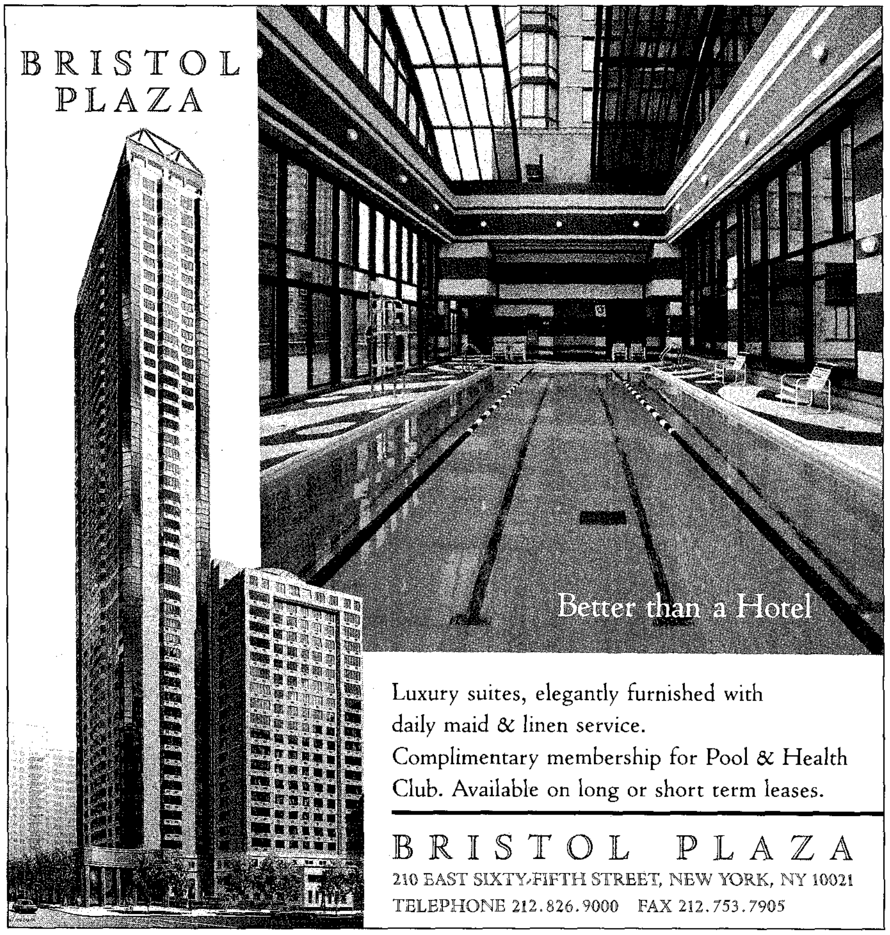
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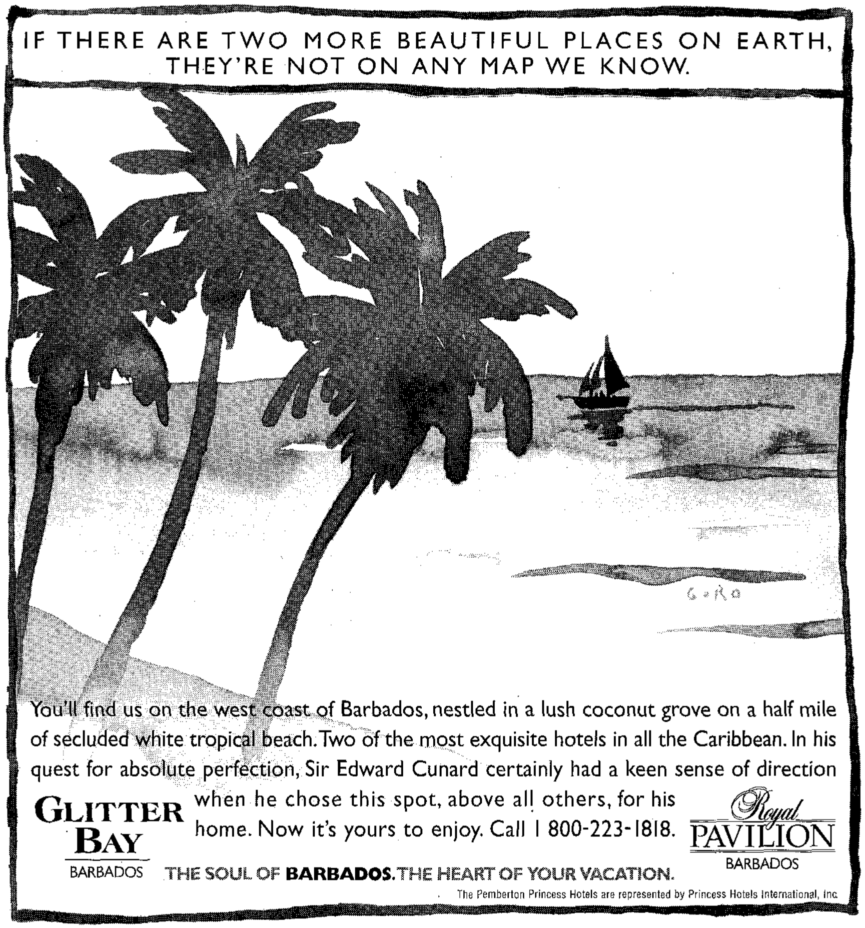
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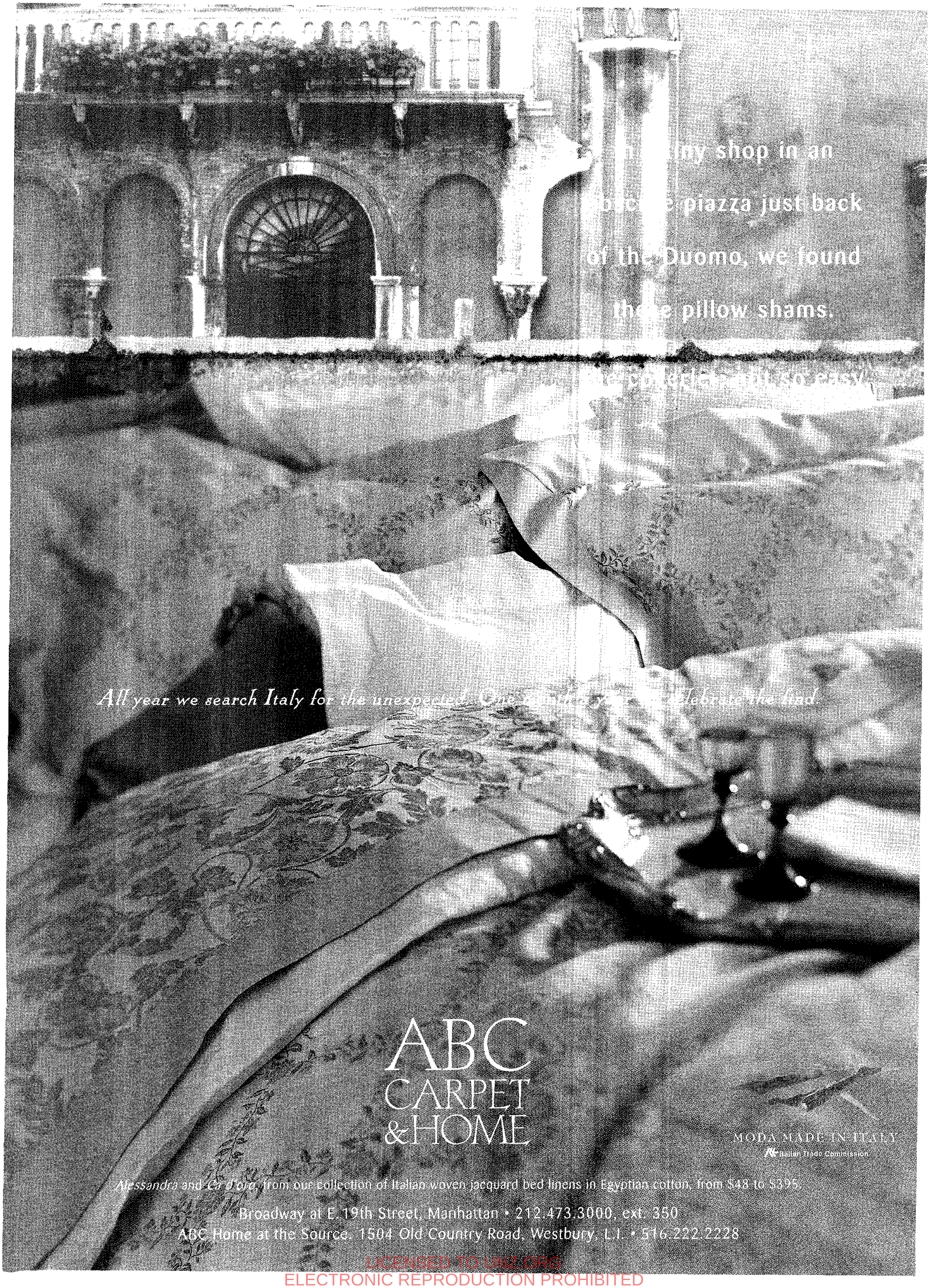
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Live and Learn

"HARD LESSONS" SHOULD BE mandatory reading for all parents in this city [by Susan Brenna, April 13]. That anyone could defend this outrageously unfair system is nothing short of mind-boggling. This is not a level playing field. It is a skewed, discriminatory quota system based on the arbitrary distinctions of bureaucrats who answer to no one but themselves. Particularly bewildering is the attitude of so-called educators like the Dr. Harrington mentioned in the article. Aren't these people aware that the op-ed policy that they espouse (along with numerous other programs/mistakes) is directly responsible for the flight of middle-class children to private, parochial, and suburban schools? The final lesson for our middle-school students is this: Your hard work, perseverance, and achievement are completely worthless in the eyes of the Board of Education.

Edward Brandwein
MANHATTAN

YEARS AGO, GOOD STUDENTS MAKING THE jump to high school had three choices: the elite science schools, private schools, or a move to the suburbs. Today, there are many alternatives. My daughter is a senior at the High School for Environmental Studies. When she applied as a tenth-grader, she listed HSES as her first choice and the New York City Lab School as her second. She also took the test for the science schools. She scored high enough to get into Brooklyn Tech and also got accepted to HSES. Although she was hurt that some of her friends were going to Bronx Science and Stuyvesant, she knew that HSES was the right school for her. An administration and teachers that care, relatively small class sizes, a state-of-the-art facility, AP classes, and an honors curriculum, not to mention a bent toward the environment, were the factors that made this a no-brainer.

Letters may be edited for space and clarity. They should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, New York *Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, or sent via e-mail to 104700.2560@compuserve.com. Please include a daytime phone number.*

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Was it the right choice? You bet! She is graduating this year and has been accepted to five colleges, two offering her academic scholarships. Sure, you get a mix of all levels of students, but isn't that what public education is all about?

J. Nelson
MANHATTAN

“HARD LESSONS” HIT HOME HARD! WE are currently living this nightmare—our daughter, who has been in highly gifted public-school programs since kindergarten, has consistently made honor roll in middle school and was inducted into ARISTA in seventh grade but, unfortunately, did not test well enough to get into one of the specialized science high schools. She is now in limbo after being rejected by six schools and wait-listed by one. Betrayal by the system does not begin to describe how we feel at this point. If our daughter does not succeed in getting into the one school that wait-listed her, we have no alternatives. Private school at $18,000 a year is not an option, and neither is our zoned school, where one student received a Regent's diploma last year. Our only recourse after round two may be to leave the city. After investing so much energy into promoting the public schools in this city, I do feel betrayed. I have always been a cheerleader for public education, but after living through this, I wonder if I can go through it again in five years with my son.

Stephanie K. Turk
MANHATTAN

THE LAB SCHOOL PARENTS AND STAFF were delighted with the many wonderful things Susan Brenna had to say about our school. However, we are concerned the headline YOUR KID DIDN'T MAKE THE CUT AT STUYVESANT? gives a misleading impression that the article is only about alternatives for students who just miss getting into the science schools. The Lab School has a large number of students who do qualify for the science schools and who choose to remain at Lab. More and more, Lab is our parents' and students' first choice for an academically challenging middle and high school.

Jean Bergantini Grillo
Erika MacBride
Co-Presidents, Parents Association,
N.Y.C. Lab School
MANHATTAN

OUR KID DID MAKE THE CUT AT STUYVESANT, but after careful consideration of what both schools had to offer our child, we chose Townsend Harris High School. Your article implies that the education a student receives at Townsend Harris is inferior to one from Stuyvesant. Did your reporter take the time to look at the amount students receive in scholarship money? Seventeen million dollars for 250 graduates at Townsend Harris versus $30 million for 700 graduates at Stuyvesant! Do the math, and you will see that Townsend Harris is clearly the winner.

Kathleen and Paul M. DeVita
HOLLIS HILLS, N.Y.

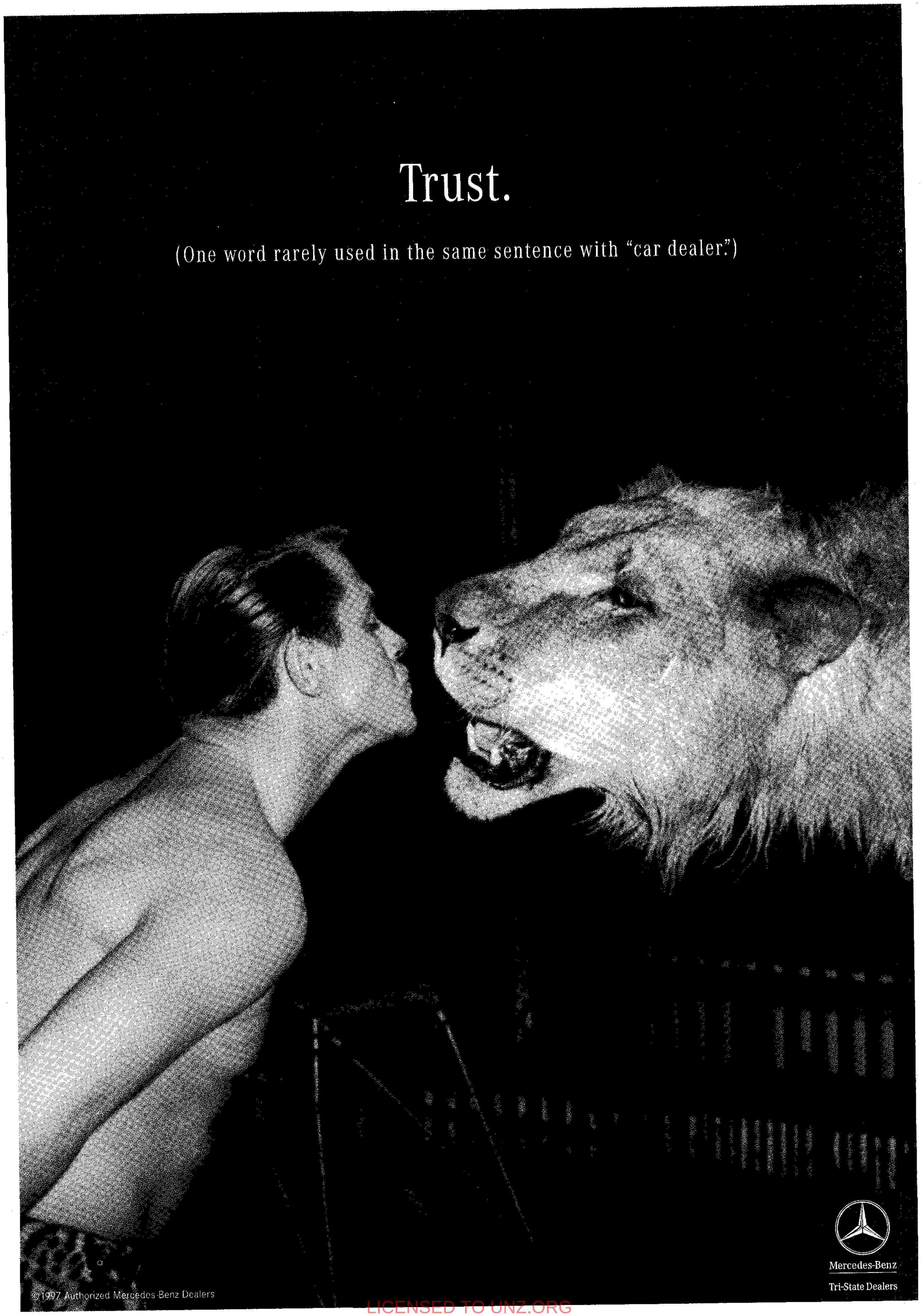
ONE THING STRUCK ME UPON READING SUSAN Brenna's article: the panicked stampede away from the local high school. I found this disturbing. The job of the elite schools is to foster the exceptional academic abilities, talents, and interests of students who would be bored or frustrated by the average high-school curriculum. They were not intended to be the precious few lifeboats for a sinking education system. I also don't understand why it is the elite schools' job to save the students at the lower end of the grading system. While doing so is both possible and necessary, it should be at the local-high-school level. Restore to students today what students in the past had: the knowledge that even if they didn't make an elite school, they still had a shot at a quality education.

Meg Johnson
LONG ISLAND

I WANT TO LET THE PARENTS OF SMART kids know they have another option: home schooling. I have a smart kid who was in a situation similar to those described in the article. We finally took charge of our kid's education ourselves and set up a school at home. There is so much curriculum, interactive software, tests, and study aid easily available, and there are more and more home-schooled kids around, so your child can have a choice of friends too. What a difference it made in all of our lives: I now have a smart and happy kid!

Tatyana A. Pritkova
CLIFFSIDE PARK, N.J.

THERE'S ONE SCHOOL YOU FORGOT BIGtime: Hunter College High School. Nowhere did I see one word! Hunter's been educating our brightest and most well-rounded kids for more than 100 years. For most of its history, Hunter was all-girl and was considered on a par with Stuyvesant. Stuyvesant had all boys and was the science school. Hunter was for liberal arts. If you look at Hunter's records, you'll see how many Ivy Leaguers and National Merit Scholarship kids came from there. Check out how many professionals, artists, writers,



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LETTERS

journalists, doctors, lawyers, scientists, etc., came from Hunter. We were thought of as an experimental school because they would try out new ideas on us. If they worked, then they were incorporated into the public schools. Hunter was and still is tops.

Dr. Robin Wieder
BROOKLYN

I AM A SENIOR AT TOWNSEND HARRIS HIGH School. I was disappointed in your portrayal of us. Yes, this is a school that focuses on doing well and going to college. But this is not all we are about. First of all, Dr. Largmann's infamous expression is *not* “We don't expect excellence, we merely accept it.” It is “We do not demand excellence, we merely expect it.” Despite this, I agree with my friend Dominika, whom you quoted as saying that most of the pressure here is self-imposed by the students. We are a humanities school, but this focus was not chosen because we wanted to distinguish ourselves from the countless science schools in the city. We like humanities!

As for the complaining, unsatisfied students, I must say that I am happy that I chose Townsend Harris. I cannot imagine the past four years of my life being better at any other high school, even Bronx Science, which I turned down in order to come here. Yes, we have homework and collaterals (term projects, in laymen's terms) and our principal does seem like a “headmaster” in certain ways. But we also have a vibrant student body and, most important, teachers that care about our doing well.

Gina D'Andrea
QUEENS

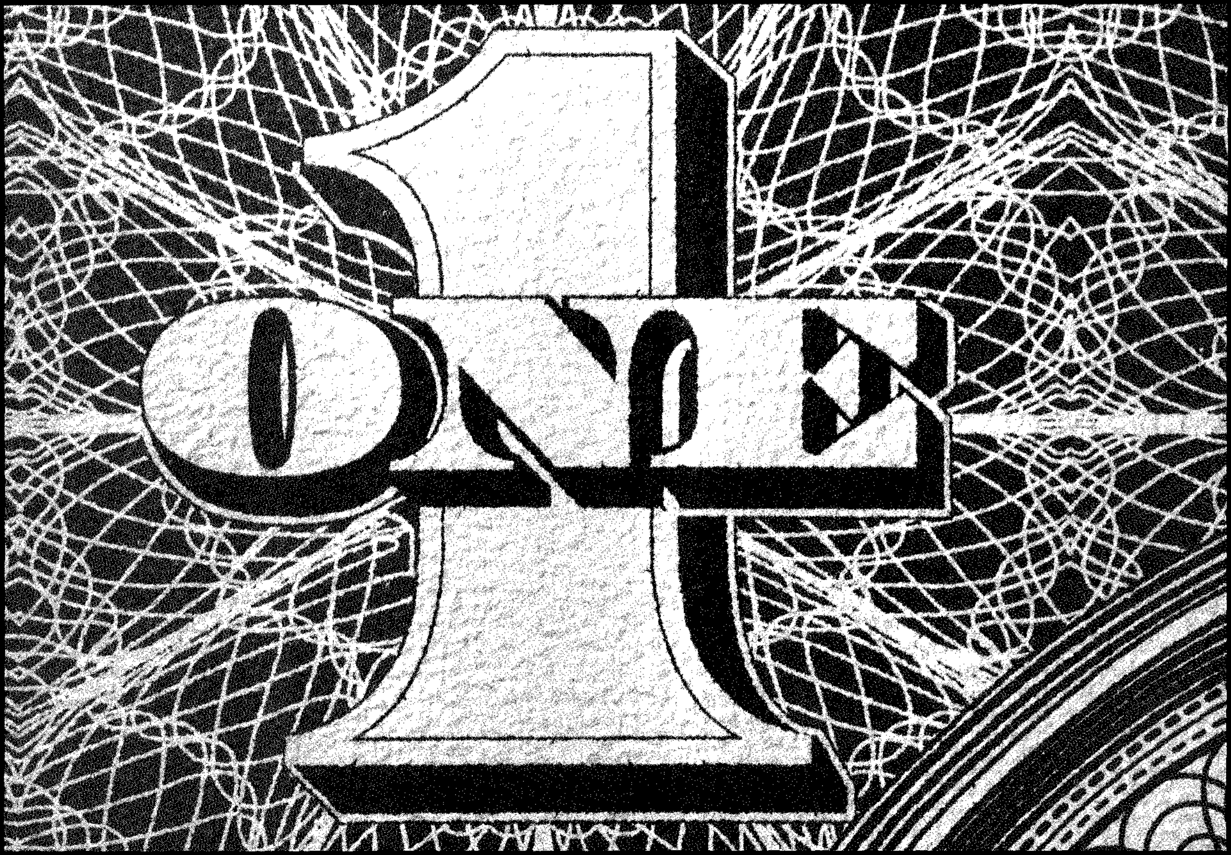
Architect, Architect

YOUR APRIL 13 “INTELLIGENCER” ITEM ENtitled “No Wynn Situation for Gehry” said that Frank Gehry is currently designing Condé Nast's new building in Times Square. This is incorrect. The Condé Nast building at 4 Times Square has been designed by the New York City firm of Fox & Fowle Architects. The developer is the Durst Organization.

Bruce S. Fowle, FAIA
Senior principal, Fox & Fowle
MANHATTAN

Editor's Note: Frank Gehry is designing the Condé Nast cafeteria at 4 Times Square.

Clarification The couple pictured nuzzling at Decade on page 28 of our March 30 Singles issue are, as his wedding ring would indicate, happily married.



Detail of U.S. one-dollar Federal Reserve note, which costs about four cents to print.

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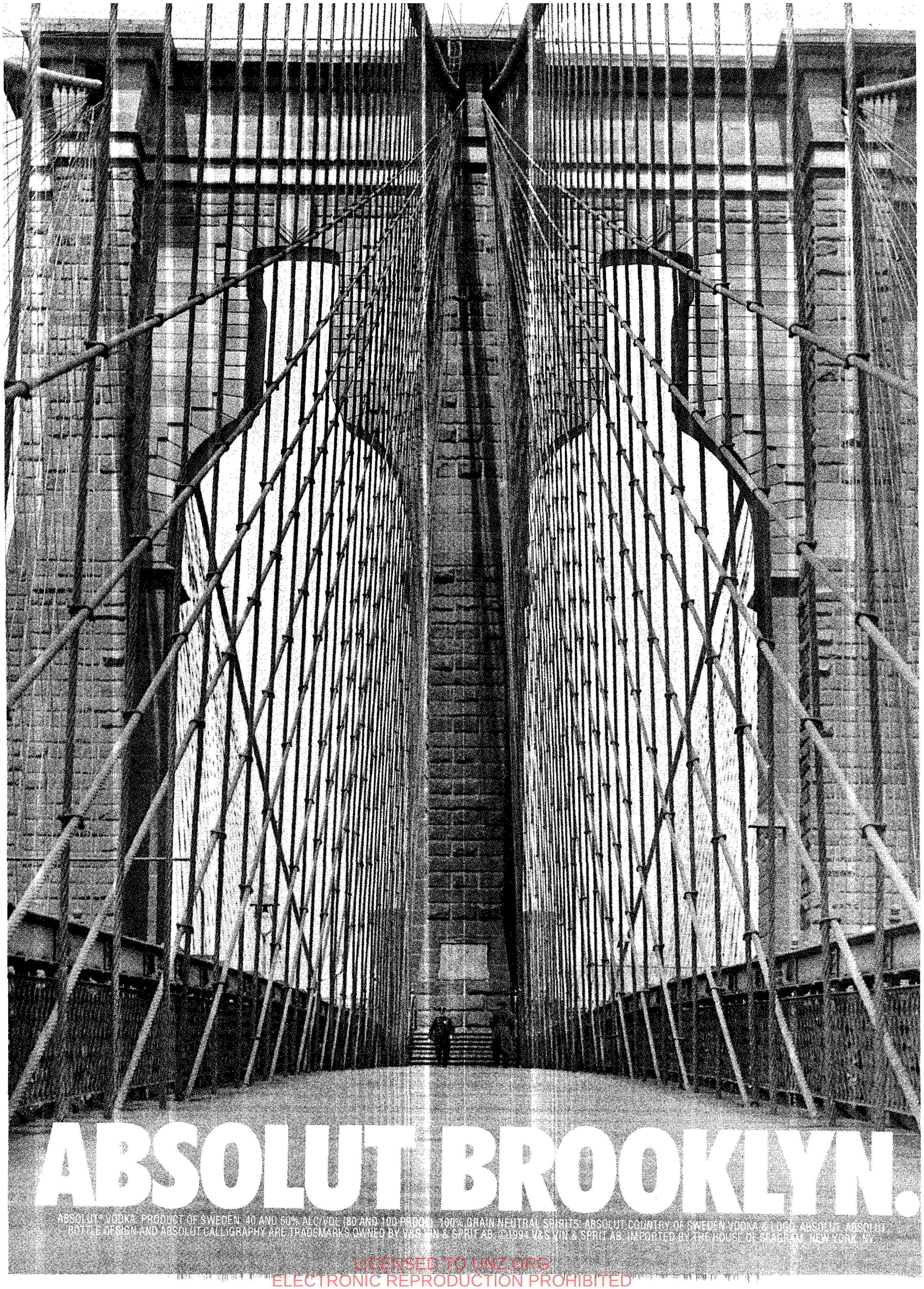

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BY BETH LANDMAN KEIL AND DEBORAH MITCHELL

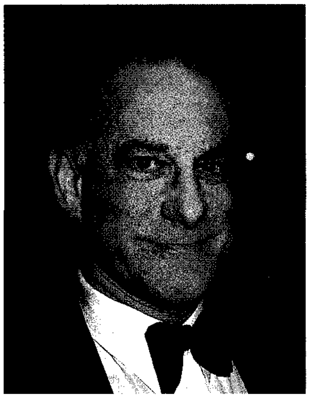
INTELLIGENCER

FITS OVER THE *NEWS* THAT'S PRINT

Despite healthy ratings, New York 1 is still fighting for recognition. According to insiders at the local station, when **Mike McAlary** won the Pulitzer Prize earlier this month for his reporting on the **Abner Louima** police-brutality case, the *Daily News*'s coverage of the victory angered the team at NY1, which resents the tabloid's failure to mention that the local news channel broke the story the night before the *News* hit the stands. An April 15 *News* article about the Pulitzer Prizes cited "the McAlary column that broke open the Louima case." Steve Paulus, senior vice-president of news, says, "I would think they wouldn't want to print something that isn't fact. As journalists, they should know better." In retaliation, NY1 staff discussed ignoring the *News* in its *In the Papers* roundup of stories from the dailies but ultimately settled for covering it in brief. "We wanted them to know we were angry," says a NY1 insider. Responds McAlary, "I was the first person to interview Abner Louima; I was the only one with him in that hospital room. The next day, the only photo of Louima appeared in the *News*. I was the first to interview [accused ringleader] **Justin Volpe** and the only one to interview [Volpe's] girlfriend."

LEARNING FROM BERENDT THE HARD WAY

Maybe the Learning Annex could offer a course in How to Appease Angry Writers, taught by **Tom Dwyer,** its program director. Dwyer had signed up *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* author **John Berendt** for a lecture on May 7. But when the school's catalogue announced on the cover that Berendt would speak on "How to Write a Best-Seller," Dwyer had to field phone calls from the angry author, who had never agreed to that topic. "We didn't realize that he would get mad about it," explains Dwyer. "But I think we've done everything we can to make it up to him." That included calling all the students to clarify that Berendt would instead speak on creative nonfiction. Berendt insists that he has no tips to offer on writing blockbusters. "It would be presumptuous of me to try," says the writer, who's been on the New York *Times* best-seller list for 197 weeks. "I had no idea I was writing one, and so I can't say how I did it."



John Berendt: Learning curve ball

A TAXING SITUATION FOR WILDENSTEIN

The cost of divorce is starting to add up for **Alec Wildenstein,** whose multi-million-dollar split from the surgically enhanced **Jocelyne** is now spawning a tax investigation. The city's Department of Finance is looking into whether Alec has been avoiding New York City's income tax by claiming Swiss residency, according to a source close to the warring couple. Alec tried to have his divorce heard in Switzerland, but New York's state and appellate courts rejected his argument and kept the case here. When New York Supreme Court justice **Marylin Diamond** granted Jocelyne $160,000 a month in temporary maintenance in March, she virtually waved a red flag for the tax man, writing, "It is undisputed that the parties have never paid United States income taxes." Alec appealed that decision—and faced sharp questions from the appellate judge on the question of his residency. Now Jocelyne's attorney, **Bernard Clair,** has asked the court to charge Alec, who has continued to withhold support, with contempt—which could mean jail time. Meanwhile, one source insists that Clair has already been subpoenaed in the tax investigation. The lawyer refused to discuss that, and a Department of Finance spokesman would neither confirm nor deny whether an investigation is under way.

Jocelyne Wildenstein: Affairs of state

A. M. HOMES'S FRENCH TWIST

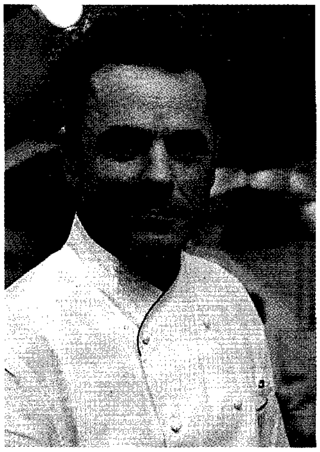
So much for French sophistication. Belfond, the French publisher who'd signed up **A. M. Homes's** *The End of Alice,* has just decided to drop the controversial book. The novel is told from the point of view of a middle-aged jailed pedophile-murderer, and it was due to come out in the land of baguettes this September. But after it provoked an outcry in Britain, the French publisher had second thoughts. "We have decided against the publication of this book in France," confirms Belfond's **Valerie Marechal,** adding that the work faced "a total rejection from the journalists here in France" and from the company's sales force, largely because of a recent high-profile pedophilia case in Belgium. "They thought people were especially sensitive to the issue, which is all the more reason, I think, for the book to be out there," says Homes, who adds that the decision seems "shocking, because we don't think of the French as being particularly squeamish when it comes to sexuality. They sheltered **Roman Polanski,** and they published *Lolita* first, when it couldn't be published here."

Photographs: top, Henry McGee/Globe Photos; bottom, Brad Rickerby/Sipa.

Bill Moyers:
On call

REPORTER SIGNS UP FOR MOORE ACTION

One lawyer seems to have cornered the market for writers with personal-injury claims. **Thomas Moore,** who represented *Daily News* columnist **Sidney Zion** after the death of his 18-year-old daughter, Libby, has been retained by New York *Times* reporter **Neil MacFarquhar,** who was hit by an out-of-control bus whose driver may have suffered an epileptic seizure. "We filed a notice of claim" against the city, reports Moore, who adds that he's currently drafting MacFarquhar's civil action, which will probably be served by the end of this week. "The fact is that Neil has gone through a terrible ordeal and—despite the best of hopes and aspirations—will have this with him for the rest of his life," Moore continues. MacFarquhar has had five operations, spent four months in the hospital, and will need lifelong physical therapy. "As a New Yorker," he says, "I ought to be able to ride my bike or walk down the street without worrying that the next bus that comes along is an unguided missile."



David Bouley:
Check, please

HAPPY TRAILS FOR RUDY AND ZACCARO

LIKE MOTHER, LIKE SON: At least one member of **Geraldine Ferraro's** family doesn't have to wait until September 15 for election results. **John Zaccaro Jr.,** who runs the Ravioli Store on Sullivan Street, is now running for office in Fire Island's Saltaire, where his family has vacationed for years. Zaccaro, former manager of his family's restaurant Cascabel, is one of six candidates running for two nonpaying positions on the board of trustees that governs Saltaire. The candidates debate on Saturday, May 9, and the election is on Friday, May 22. But don't assume that Junior's got his mother's vote: Ferraro is registered to vote in Queens, so she won't be able to vote in her only son's first election. Zaccaro, on vacation, could not be reached for comment.

CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE: Was **Rudy Giuliani** just blowing smoke when he vowed to support Arizona senator **John McCain**? The mayor flew to Phoenix recently to speak at a re-election fund-raiser for the Republican McCain, fueling rumors that Giuliani may soon be hitting the campaign trail himself. Questions as to Giuliani's true intentions heated up when, after the fund-raiser, the mayor lit up a cigar, despite McCain's staunchly anti-tobacco platform. At least Giuliani tried to be discreet: He retreated to Arizona's outpost of SoHo's Merc-Bar before smoking the stogie. (Keeping him company were press secretary **Cristyne Lategano,** Deputy Mayor **Randy Levine,** and two other aides.) MercBar owner **John McDonald** is forgiving of Giuliani's indiscretion. "I am vehement in my ban against cigar-smoking in my establishment," he says. "But hey, I'm a New Yorker. It doesn't pay to make enemies with the mayor."

SMOOTH OPERATOR: He may be revered for his in-depth documentaries, but sometimes **Bill Moyers** just phones it in. The PBS star was asked to honor legendary political campaigner and sound engineer **Tony Schwartz** at the Museum of Television & Radio last month but was called to Africa for an assignment. That didn't stop Moyers from getting his message heard. The event program still listed Moyers, but then read: "To hear his two-minute recorded statement . . . please call (212) 586-3821." Callers were treated to Moyers saying: "I will not be present . . . to express my admiration . . . but I'm glad that, through a medium Tony made famous called sound, I can do it this way." Says Schwartz: "There are three lines set up, so feel free to call!"

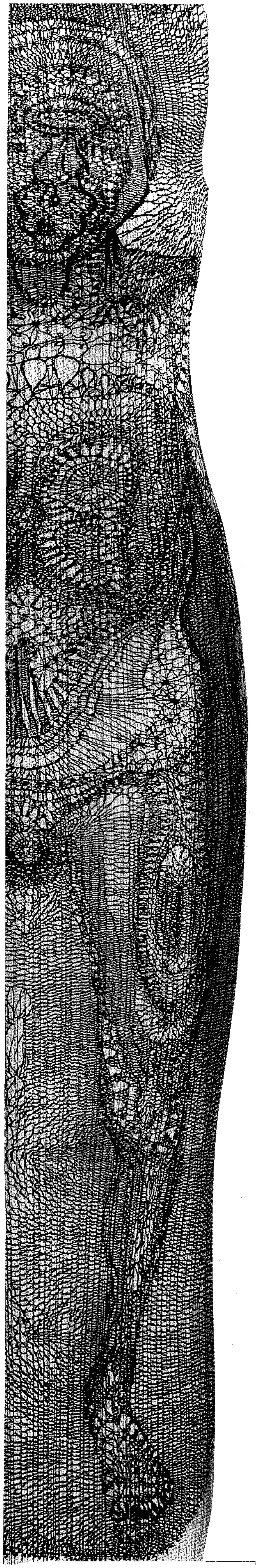
RISEN IN THE RANKS: In the latest clash of the news-media titans, the New York *Times* has come out on top. Political scribe **James Risen,** currently at the Washington bureau of the Los Angeles *Times,* was being courted by the Washington *Post* and *Time,* according to a source. But after personal wooing from *Time* managing editor **Walter Isaacson,** reports the source, Risen (who broke the story of the FBI's investigation into a CIA plot to kill Saddam Hussein) has opted for the Paper of Record. "He's an extremely diligent reporter with very good sources in the intelligence community," says New York *Times* Washington-bureau chief **Mike Oreskes.**

Additional reporting by Kate Coyne.

RESERVATIONS FOR BOULEY AND LEROY

It looks as if the partnership between **David Bouley** and **Warner LeRoy** may not make it to the opening of even one of their much-heralded projects. Restaurant insiders speculate that during the endless efforts to finance the projects, which were to include the renovation of the Russian Tea Room, the two have grown impatient with one another. According to financial-world sources, the star chef has been searching for someone other than LeRoy to finance his downtown ventures, including a school, a store, and the restaurant Danube, which LeRoy and Bouley traveled to Austria together to research. Executives at First Boston have been considering investing their private funds in the projects, and Bouley has been enticing them with his talents. According to one company insider, "Bouley has been wining and dining executives at First Boston in an effort to interest them in the financing, and these people love that sort of thing." Meanwhile, a source close to Bouley says he had initially worked on recipes for the Tea Room but has long since abandoned that pursuit, and a restaurant-world source says, "Warner's been meeting with every other chef in town." Bouley refused to comment on the situation, saying, "It's all boring," and a spokesperson for LeRoy would say only, "The Russian Tea Room is moving full steam ahead."

Photographs: left, Evan Kafka/Gamma Liaison; Michael O'Neill/Outline.



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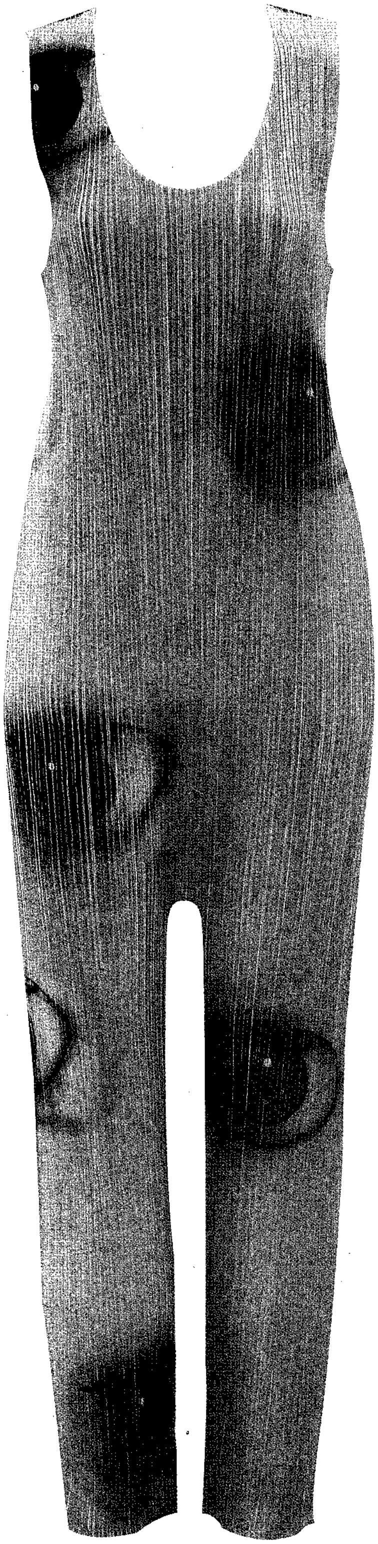

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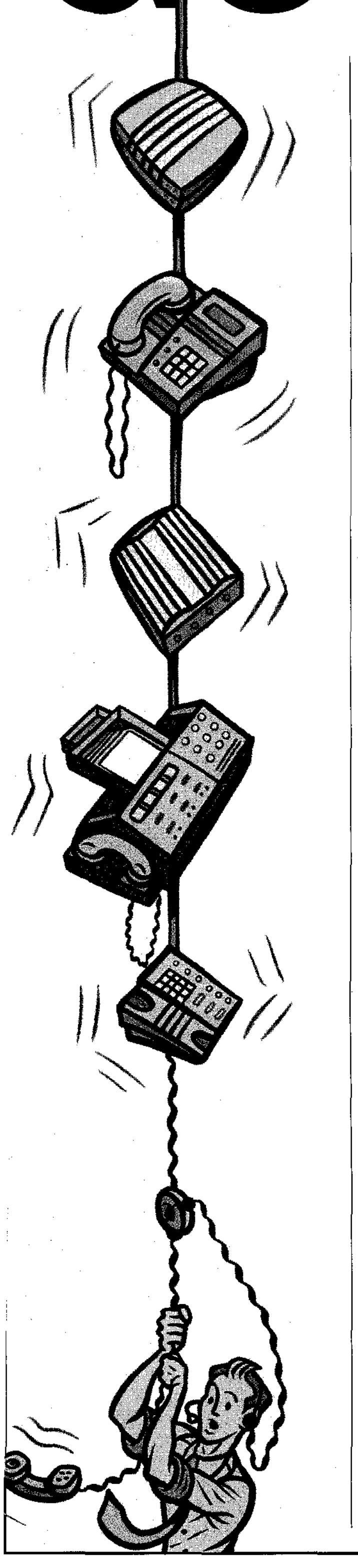


Re: Wire

A digital traffic jam is clogging your home phone lines.

Antipathy toward the phone company is as old as the telephone itself. Mark Twain was said to be so convinced operators were eavesdropping on his calls that he would periodically interrupt his conversations to bellow, "Helloooo, Central!"

Scorn for Bell's spawn today centers on new digital technologies that promise the moon and deliver . . . *sometimes*. (Much of the rabid anti-telco sentiment is on the Web, at such sites as www.bellatlanticsucks.com, formerly nynexsucks.com.) While a good deal of the anger resulted from NYNEX's initially sluggish response to the massive bandwidth needs of the Silicon Alley start-ups, it's now generally acknowledged that the phone company has risen to that particular occasion. Bell Atlantic spokesman Joe Bonomo says that 436,000 high-speed ISDN lines have been installed, 35 percent of them in the last year—no mean feat.

But if it was sometimes hard to get a lot of additional wiring into shiny new office buildings, it's just about impossible to do it in many of the city's older residential neighborhoods, where people are increasingly requesting second and third lines for their modems and faxes. "Back in 1930, if they built a twenty-apartment building, they simply put in twenty phone lines," Bonomo says. "Now, with everyone getting on the Internet, you've got this explosive growth, and it's stretching capacity."

The solution, at least according to Bell, is to go directly to the individual buildings or apartments and install digital transformers, variously known as SLCs (subscriber-line concentrators) and DAML (digital-analog mechanized line) boxes. These devices split old-school analog lines into multiple digital lines—postponing, for now, the astronomical cost and hassle of rewiring thousands of residential

(continued on page 22)

SPIN CYCLE

A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF P.R.

Name-calling

- "Naming rights for baseball parks have gone as high as $100 million. . . . A Shea or a Yankee Stadium would exceed that . . . by considerable amounts."
  —*Mayor Giuliani*

- "There is no magic figure, but in the New York market that kind of number is not unreasonable, depending on the length of the terms."
  —*Rick Horrow, Horrow Sports Ventures*

- "Naming rights for an arena in Manhattan could sell for much more than they would for a new ballpark in the Bronx."
  —Daily News

- "That number's crazy. Maybe a hundred million over a number of years."
  —*Jim Ross, Florida Marlins vice president*

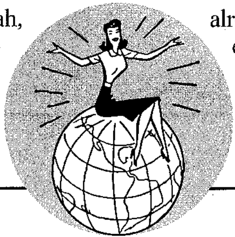
- "Yankee Stadium . . . does not need to be replaced. The evidence shows that Yankee Stadium . . . could stand another 75 years."
  —*Spokesman for Bronx borough president Fernando Ferrer*

- "I know most of the public disagrees with me. I think ten years from now, they'll say, 'Mayor Giuliani made the right decision.' "
  —*Mayor Giuliani*

CAMEO

Mother Lovers

Mothers are lousy grudge-holders. Do something stupid and they put their hands on their hips and scowl—for a moment—then relent, tousling your hair and giving you some big cookie. Buy them a bright-red scarf, and they ooh and aah, never mind that they only wear pastels. This tolerance is the theory on which Earth Day is founded. What began as a hippie-dippy birthday party for Mother Earth evolved awfully easily into the form it took this past week—a chance for land-despoiling corporations and forest-auctioning politicians to talk about the majesty of nature. It's how Mother's Day might have turned into a major industry, if it hadn't already started out as one. Still, is Mother Earth going to take offense and start carrying on with hourly droughts and famines? No. She doesn't care what you got her; she's just touched that you remembered her birthday.



Illustrations: left, Kelly Alder; right, CSA Archive.

Phone *continued from page 21*

buildings and entire blocks.

Have zeros and ones once again saved the day? Not according to Bryan McCormick. A freelance writer who works from his home in the Village, he calls digital transformers "a nightmare. On my old analog line, with a 56-Kbps modem, I was getting 49, 50, even 53K sometimes. With this new digital stuff, I'm getting 16.8 to 24K, tops."

Both 3Com, the manufacturer of Megahertz Modems, and Bell Atlantic admit that the new 56K modems—standard with new computers—aren't going to get 56-Kbps reception. Every switch from analog to digital in the patchwork of lines results in lost bandwidth. And until the entire system is built on a purely digital standard, in the words of 3Com's online support staff, "You can give up the dream of achieving fast connections" on anything less than ISDN or T1 lines.

John Caralyus, who does tech support for Raychem, manufacturers of the DAML boxes, insists the new digital transformers are sound: "We test everything before we put it out there. We have FCC and PSC standards we have to meet."

Manufacturers of customer-provided equipment also have standards to meet. Yet some of Casio's older digital answering machines, for example, have problems detecting incoming rings on the new lines. "It's not a flaw in Casio's equipment," insists a Casio spokesman. "[The phone companies] have created a digital can of worms. They're forgetting there's still a whole big world of analog out there."

Pining for pre-deregulation days? Helloooo Central, indeed. The new alternative phone companies, such as RCN and WorldCom/MFS, don't yet own much, if any, of their own hardware. Says one alternative-telco technician, "Most of us are just reselling Bell Atlantic service under a different name." The result is that if you need repair service, you have an additional layer of bureaucracy to plow through. "Really," says this source, "the only good thing about Bell Atlantic is that everyone else is worse."

JOHN BOWE

BROADCASTING

OB/ GYN-FM

A deliberately indelicate show about female trouble.

Virginia Reath and Barbara Glickstein, co-hosts of "Snatches."

"I'VE BEEN WAITING TO DO this for over a month," says engineer Michael G. Haskins, donning protective rubber gloves in one of WBAI-FM's (99.5) cramped West Side studios. He points to two fortyish women sitting opposite the control panel: Virginia Reath, a reproductive-health activist who works at a gynecological practice, and Barbara Glickstein, a registered nurse, hospital administrator, and co-producer of the WBAI women's-health program "Healthstyles."

"And now," says Haskins, "stay tuned for 'Snatches'—where there's a time and a place." So begins the world's first gynecological call-in program, a special edition of "Healthstyles" now heard at 1 P.M. on the first Friday of every month. ("Snatches" will take a brief hiatus in May and resume June 5.) But before the women plunge into this particular installment, on vaginal discharges, there's a musical interlude, courtesy of guest Nora York (lyrics by York-Glickstein-Reath), who sings to the tune of Burt Bacharach's "The Look of Love":

"The stuff of woo / is on my pants / The stuff down there / won't go away / The stuff of woo is so annoying / it takes my day away / Is this the sugar binge not an STD I pray . . ."

Glickstein and Reath have brought a funny, loose Kaffeeklatsch tone to the unmentionable, thereby liberating a call-in audience to share some intimate moments. "Bertha from Brooklyn," 70, tells a heart-wrenching story of the discovery of her first period by her panicked mother and observes, "If only young girls could listen to your program, it would be a revelation. You girls are the end of shame."

"We want to break through the shroud of embarrassment," says Glickstein. And on "Snatches," a whole range of uncomfortable subjects—first periods, feminine-hygiene products, sexually transmitted diseases—are fair, often funny, game. "We're going to be talking a lot about 'down there,' " Glickstein says, "because 'down there' is rich. It's also poignant, because it's the topic through which we [women] have been trashed so badly."

The two met in Yonkers at a health conference—the dry, academic atmosphere drove them from the lecture hall at the same time. They decided to combine their knowledge with their natural repartee. Glickstein persuaded her "Healthstyles" co-producer to cede the occasional show to "Snatches," and now, after "The Body Hair Show" and "The Pelvic Exam Show," it draws a loyal and large audience presumably separate and apart from its lead-in program, "Natural Living," hosted by nutritionist–conspiracy theorist Gary Null.

"We want to break down the boundaries, but not break down the club," says Glickstein. Adds Reath, "We love the club."

STANLEY MIESES

FAREWELL

Que Linda

SHE WAS JUST A NEW YORK GIRL TO ME. HER family is from Scarsdale, Park Avenue, and East Hampton. She and Paul summered in Amagansett. Before they married, she had a little apartment in the Eighties on Third, with her daughter. It wasn't a New York apartment; there were things in the refrigerator. She was domestic—I think he liked that about her.

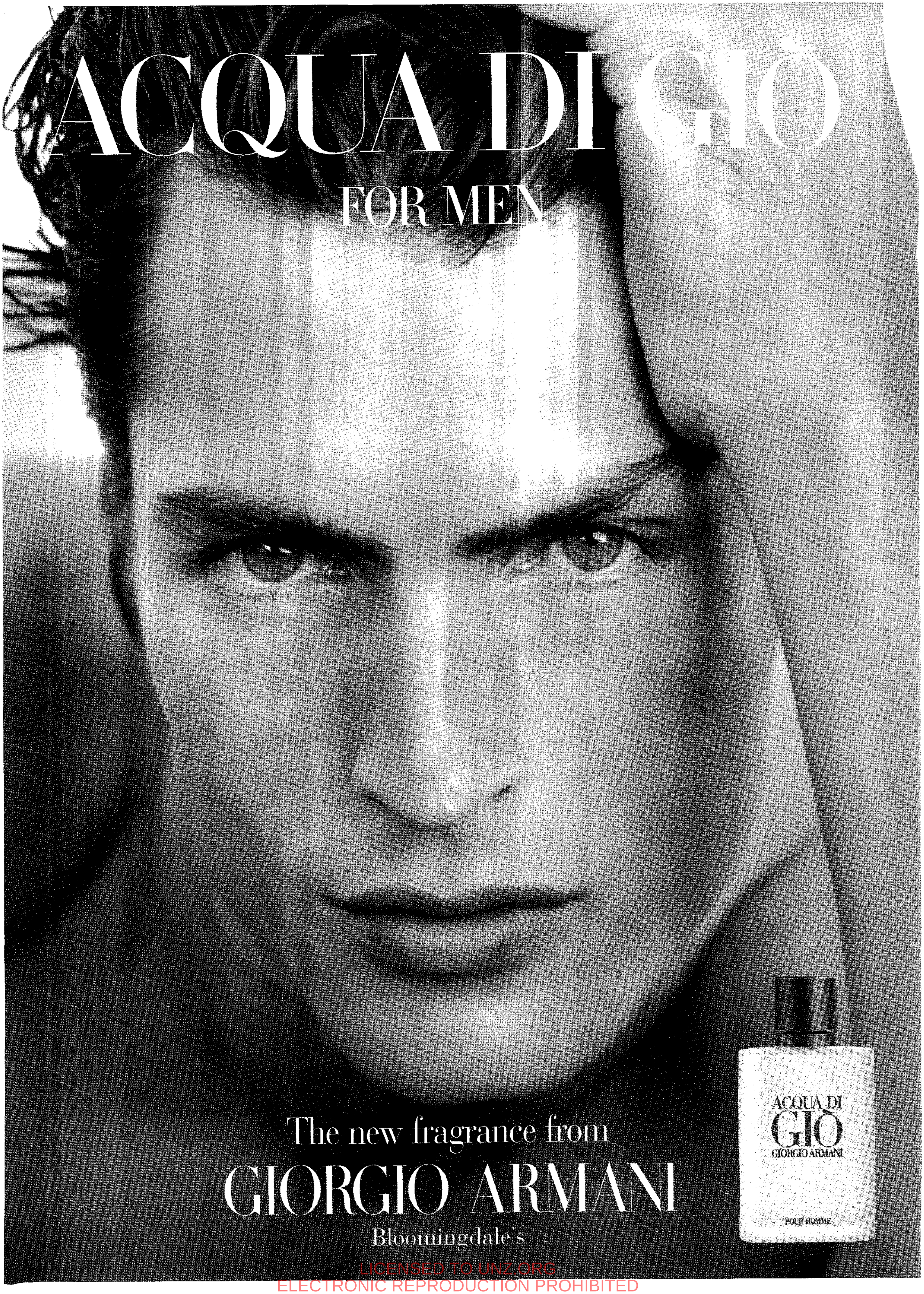
Years later, the whole family was staying at the Stanhope, and I went over to see her—and then we all went to the Metropolitan. I used to spend a lot of time there when I was a lonely youth—and so did she, it turned out. She knew the European galleries so well.

Up until John was killed, they'd walk the streets, and people would laugh or point or go into paralysis. But not after 1980. All that became impossible. They were worried about the kids, I think.

When I talked to Paul, I guess he was semi-in-shock. But very voluble, eager to be consoling: "Wasn't she great? Wasn't she beautiful?" He said, "We can't talk about her in the past tense. She's still here, she's still here."

DANNY FIELDS

The McCartney family in 1972.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POUR HOMME

FILM

I'll Be Your Mirror

Lou Reed stares down a friendly lens.

"Timothy is just a very warm and generous person," says Lou Reed. "Plus, he has no hair. He's not threatening. You know you won't get savaged by him. He's no Nazi."

It makes perverse sense that when Reed, that least media-friendly of rock stars, finally agreed to authorize a documentary about his life—*Lou Reed: Rock and Roll Heart,* a surprise hit at the Sundance Film Festival, will air nationally on PBS April 29—he chose Timothy Greenfield-Sanders, a director who had never done an interview before, much less a film.

For twenty years one of New York's premiere magazine portrait photographers, Greenfield-Sanders, 46, is a well-known charmer whose golden Rolodex is filled with celebrity subjects who often become his friends. After he shot the leathery rock legend for a magazine several years ago, Reed followed suit—and even let his new buddy follow him around with a video camera. Soon Greenfield-Sanders had a trove of footage but no idea what to do with it.

A year later, Greenfield-Sanders ran into Susan Lacy, the executive producer of Thirteen-WNET's "American Masters" series, whom he'd known since their children started school together. "I don't want to give the impression that anyone with a Hi-8 camera can walk into my office," says Lacy. "But with a series called 'American Masters,' it's hard to come up with subjects who have a body of work and can appeal to a younger audience. So when Timothy said he had this footage of Lou, I told him to call the next day."

Not that he was totally unqualified. After getting an art-history degree at Columbia in 1974, Greenfield—he changed his name after marrying Karin Sanders—went to Hollywood to study directing at the American Film Institute. He found himself taking portraits of the visiting directors: Hitchcock, Truffaut, Bergman. "I was 23, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed," he says, "and these great directors would tell me to move a light or change lenses. It was the best training you could get."

Reed and auteur Greenfield-Sanders.

Back in New York, through Karin, daughter of the Abstract Expressionist painter Joop Sanders, Timothy met and photographed virtually every living artist in the city, and by 1985, his delicately deadpan portraits had become a signature style. He got a big break when Rei Kawakubo of Comme des Garçons asked him to photograph the art world wearing her clothes. "I was really lucky," he says. "The only reason I got De Kooning, Noguchi, and even Hilton Kramer is because they really respected the clothes. This wasn't Benetton." Soon he was shooting John Malkovich, Jodie Foster, and Reed—all now friends, of course.

"Most people are single chessboards with one or two strategies, but Timothy is a series of multiple chessboards," says art critic Robert Pincus-Witten. "He has Hollywood, the art world, the magazine world, his family. It's remarkable how he moves these chess pieces around with such keen strategy but also such a sense of fun. He's not out to win the game, just to play."

Will *Rock and Roll Heart,* with its edgy, staccato pace and interviews with the surviving Velvets and Sonic Youth *and* Vaclav Havel, play in Peoria? "Everybody seems to have a Lou Reed fantasy," says Greenfield-Sanders. "What makes me happy is that people who see the film, whether they're 75 or 16, want to play the music. Everything sort of connects."

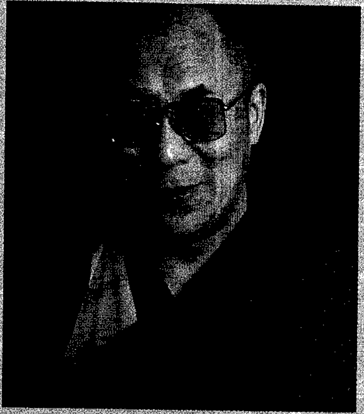
Craig Bromberg

RELIGION

Zero Worship: The Deity the Dalai Lama Doesn't Love

When American-born Kelsang Jampel became a Buddhist monk in 1996, the last thing he thought he would ever be doing was protesting against His Holiness the Dalai Lama. But that is exactly what 26-year-old Jampel, who lives in Boston, and dozens of other monks are in New York to do this week. While the temporal leader of Tibet and Nobel Peace laureate is in town to accept the Juliet Hollister Award (for "heightening spiritual awareness and engaging in interfaith dialogue") from the Temple for Understanding, the monks will picket. They are part of the Shugden Coalition, a group numbering in the thousands that is contesting the Dalai Lama's ban on the popular Buddhist tradition of worshiping Dorje Shugden as a protector deity.

The Dalai Lama once practiced Shugden worship but has discouraged it since 1976, when the Nechung oracle suggested the deity was a malevolent spirit harmful to the leader's personal well-being and to the Tibetan cause. In 1996, five years after a senior monk, Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, established a Dorje Shugden order in England called the New Kadampa Tradition (NKT), the Dalai Lama issued his official decree. The Shugden Coalition calls this a suppression of religious freedom. It has collected some 15,000 signatures petitioning the Dalai Lama to lift the ban, which, the Coalition claims, has incited human-rights violations—house-to-house searches, destruction of prayer books and images of the deity—among some of his followers, primarily in Dharmsala, India, seat of the Tibetan leader's exiled government. The NKT (which has a center in Brooklyn) also cites the Tibetan regional council's statement that it is unlawful to worship gods not recognized by the government, and the fact that the Dalai Lama's private office has asked for the names, birthplaces, and addresses of Shugden worshipers. "The Dalai Lama portrays himself as a Gandhi figure," says Jampel, "but he is acting more like a modern-day Hitler."



Tibet's Dalai Lama in 1997.

"There is no infrastructure or paramilitary authority in place to attribute a Draconian angle to this," says Ganden Thurman, a director at Tibet House (which was founded at the Dalai Lama's request). "The whole thing is like a squabble over a minor saint in the Christian church." But Donald Lopez, professor of Buddhism at the University of Michigan, has called the split "the most important conflict in the Tibetan exile community."

"People are left to decide for themselves," says Dawa Tsering, the Dalai Lama's representative in New York, "even though noncompliance may have negative consequences." As for protester Jampel, he says, "I feel a moral obligation to help the thousands who are suffering as a result of this ban."

Costas Panagopoulos

Photographs: top, Karin Greenfield-Sanders; bottom, Ulf Andersen/Gamma Liaison

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RAT CITY

PERIODIC DISPATCHES FROM THE WAR ON VERMIN

Seat Treatment

IT'S A SAFE ASSUMPTION THAT most people do not fear their own toilets. But when a notorious urban myth becomes a creepy truth, it might be time to reevaluate. (It might also be time, for some people, to stop reading.)

"I was in the bathroom doing my business when I heard a high-pitched squealing noise," says Williamsburg resident Jason McKay. "Naturally, it took me a while to realize the sound was coming from underneath me. I stood up and saw a big old rat trying to climb up the side of the toilet."

Yes, he tried to flush it. No, it wouldn't go down.

Was this an isolated incident, limited to the converted-factory living of *les bohèmes*? Says one traumatized West Village resident, "Let's just say it—the rat—touched me. I slammed the lid down, and every time I opened it the rat would jump a foot in the air. I finally had to kill it with Clorox. I considered leaving New York."

According to Jeff Eisenberg, the president of Pest Away Exterminating, hysterical porcelain-specific calls come from all over the city. "Even in the fancy buildings," he says. "Rats are good swimmers. The highest I've heard one going is the sixteenth floor. And when people are actually on the toilet when a rat wants out—well, needless to say, they freak."

Charles Sturcken, chief of staff of the Department of Environmental Protection (which administers the city's sewer system), says, "We've never heard of rats coming in through toilets." But he concedes that "obviously there are a lot of them in the sewers—maybe it happens when there's construction on the sewer lines that stirs up the rat warrens." In any event, the problem is common enough for exterminators to sell toilet-pipe "Rat Guards." Pest Away moves a few thousand a year. "We don't want to sell fear," says Eisenberg, "but most of our Rat Guard customers are people who have had this happen to them. Obviously, you couldn't deal with it twice in a lifetime."

No. And maybe that's where the typical New Yorker's trademark adaptability comes in. "If you lose your wallet in a cab once, from then on you check the backseat before you get out," explains the West Village rat-killer, who did not leave the city. "Now I carefully inspect every toilet before I even think of using it."

KATE AURTHUR

THE SCENE

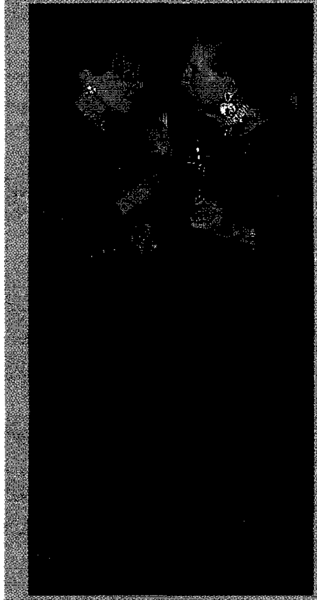
Ladies Night

Photographs by Patrick McMullan

Mary Tyler Moore and Bernadette Peters at the ASPCA's Dance With the Animals, held at the Pierre hotel.

Anne Heche, Janeane Garofalo, Jennifer Aniston, and Ellen DeGeneres at the premiere for *The Object of My Affection*, held at Gotham Bar & Grill.

Julie Delpy and Petula Clark meeting by chance in Washington Square Park.



Lee Copley Thaw and Rosamond Bernier celebrating the reinstallation of the Venetian Room at the French-American Foundation.

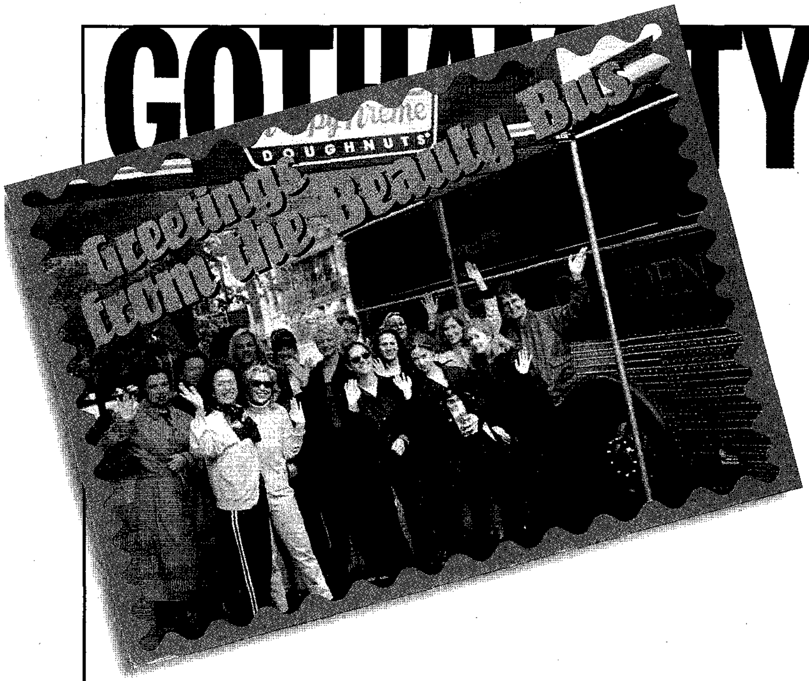
Lauren Veronis, Abe Rosenthal, and Lally Weymouth celebrating Shirley Lord's new book, *The Crasher*, at a party thrown by Michael Gould.

Samantha Cahan, Aerin Lauder, and Marie-Anne Oudejans at the launch of Estée Lauder's Dazzling Gold and Silver fragrances.

llustration by Von R. Glitschka.

GOTHAM STYLE

EDITED BY DANY LEVY


Krispy Kreme
DOUGHNUTS
Greetings from the Beauty Bus

▲ So last week, some flack calls to try & get us out to a spa called DePasquale in Jersey. And we think, "Jersey?" But then we think, "Spa." Plus, a massage didn't sound like a bad idea & neither did the bikini wax. So to Krispy Kreme we go, to catch the Beauty Bus with a dozen other media people who also woke up that Sunday to a bad hair day & no brunch plans.

Now: Why haven't other P.R. types hopped on this bus gimmick? Because these DePasquale people don't just invite beauty editors onto the turnpike & let 'em stare at smokestacks, we had music (Billy Joel) & a movie (*Hairspray*) & hand massages that had us so limp by the time we got to Morris Plains, we could barely hold on to our skim-milk cappuccinos. Five hours of purified air, seaweed wraps, & salt rubs & a session on the vibrating pedicure chair didn't help on the alertness front, either. Only when we heard about the on-site plastic surgeon did we snap to attention.

As junkets go, it was a bit too "greater metropolitan area," if you know what we mean, but it's a trend worth exploring. Peels on Wheels, anybody?

See you back home!

Heavy Metal

In a year that's already seen the resurrection of such eighties street staples as break dancing and Sergio Valente, it was only a matter of time before new-school hipsters would start breaking out the old-school, Run-D.M.C.–style gold. Massive gold jewelry—worn around the neck, over the knuckles, embedded in teeth—has started reappearing on the streets and in fashion spreads from *Details* to *Spin;* Goldie, the much-imitated English D.J., has taken to wearing dozens of thick gold chains at once; and Bulgari even has a $22,700 eighteen-karat-gold rope chain, otherwise known on the street as a "dookie roll."

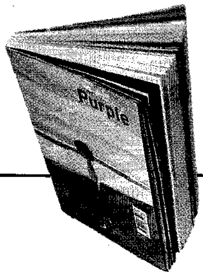
What's behind the return to the gold standard? "People like Run-D.M.C. are our heroes," explains Everlast, the rapper formerly with House of Pain. "Without them, hip-hop never gets off the ground."

But Anne Kristoff, a publicist for Elektra Records who deals with artists like Ol' Dirty Bastard, Missy Elliott, and Busta Rhymes, notes that in the recent revival, these huge metal props are often inlaid with diamonds or set in platinum: "I don't think gold ever really went away," she says. "But it's about *upgrading* it now." MARIA RICAPITO

La Vie en Mauve

Not long ago, the only way you could safely wear purple was if you called it by a more auspicious name—think burgundy, aubergine, or cassis. But after a few years on the fashion ash heap (even Prince abandoned the shade), the color is back in bloom. Stores like Saks are being besieged by shoppers seeking purple threads such as those in Christa Davis's ultra-violet collection. Purple, the London public-relations firm, has built up a client list that includes CK Calvin Klein and Calvin Klein Jeans, Jade Jagger's jewelry line, and the band Texas. For those more into purple prose than purple clothes, there's *Purple*—a mini-journal of fashion, poetry, and art that's become a bible for pseudo-literate fashionistas.

Even sporty types are running with it (never mind how cool John Turturro's Jesus character is in *The Big Lebowski)*: New Balance is hip-ifying its image by adding suede sneakers, in, uh, cassis.



BODY TYPE

The Firm

Blame it on the popularity of those unflattering tube tops, but never before has the cosmetics market seen such a glut of breast-related products. Originally they were conceived for pregnant women to help reduce stretch marks, but clearly unpregnant French women latched on to them years ago for simple vanity's sake. Then again, with their aversion to the bikini top, they had good reason. Now, on Fifth Avenue, Christine Valmy is launching the "Valbreast" line with products such as the Hot Ice Breast Mask and Breast Firming Oil. The mask comes in a lump that you pop in the microwave, brush on your bust, allow to cool for 25 minutes, and then peel off. The spray reportedly acts as sealant: A spritz is used before and after mask treatments. As for Decleor's Perfect Buste remodeling mousse, Americans are not so quick to get the point. "Some people think it's for their hair," confesses a Saks clerk. But those who bother to read the label rub it into their chest, hoping to benefit from the foam's purported ability to "recontour, refirm, stimulate, and hydrate." Also hitting shelves is Philip B's Botanical Cucumber & Lotus Breast Enhancing Creme, a daily lotion that vows to "restructure collagen and normalize capilar permeability." In other words, a promise to deliver all the benefits of the WonderBra without the pesky underwire. So, as with crème brûlée, steak-frites, and tarte Tatin, we follow in the footsteps of the French. Question is, will Rudy let us go topless in Central Park?

KATE COYNE

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(to Russia, with love)

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HOLLYWOOD NIKKI FINKE

Driven to Drink

Liquor heir–cum–studio mogul Edgar Bronfman Jr. is learning the hard way that in a town where failure is the norm, looking foolish may be the biggest sin of all.

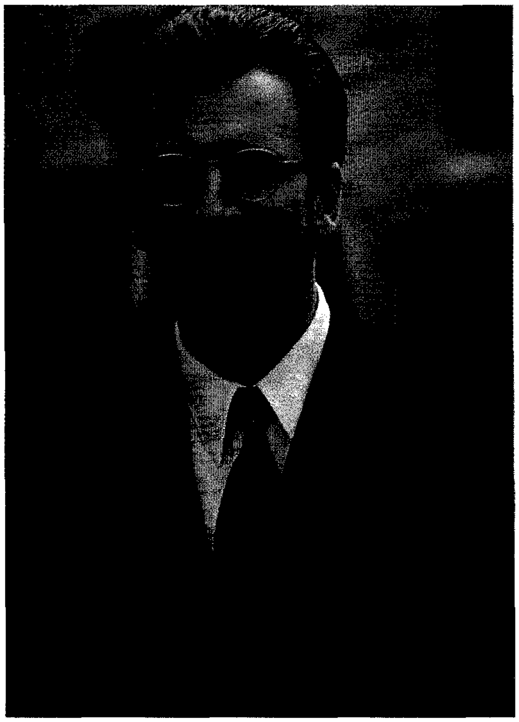
WHEN SEAGRAM SCION EDGAR Bronfman Jr. and the hired help running his Universal Studios capped a month of movie flops with a week of high-level firings, they figured the media coverage would be scorching. What they never anticipated was having the New York *Times,* which doesn't publish comics, turn them all into cartoon characters on the front page of the April 20 Business Day section. The caricatures made Bronfman et al. "look like Archie and Jughead," quipped one top agent. Seagram's spokesman was reduced to stuttering. Universal Studios president and COO Ron Meyer confided to a glum gathering of the motion-picture group that he'd taken more condolence calls that day than he had when his father died. Even exes were making nice. As chairman and CEO Frank Biondi told a friend later, "I knew it had bottomed out when Sumner Redstone called me, and Mike Ovitz called Ron," referring to his ex-boss and Meyer's ex-partner, both of whom had reason to gloat—but didn't.

Bronfman and Co. feared this was just the beginning of a protracted media scalding for Seagram-Universal that wouldn't end without a staggering body count (shades of Sony). After all, in Hollywood, where perception is everything, the only fate worse than being boiled alive is death by derision.

"I was ashamed of how we were made fun of, like we were a bunch of buffoons," Meyer told a pal. "It broke my heart." Now everyone from Edgar Jr. on down has gone mute, which of course has set the rumor mill grinding at full tilt. Here are the two biggest rumors being floated in Hollywood last week, and how to read them:

Rumor No. 1: Edgar Jr. had been axed by his father as president and CEO or, similarly, had been kicked off Seagram's five-man executive committee. *Reality check:* "I knew it wasn't true because the stock would have gone up," Biondi joked to Edgar Jr., who managed a weak guffaw. "Ted Turner would do that," one senior studio executive told me, "but Jews don't fire their sons."

But there is indeed trouble brewing inside the Bronfman clan. Uncle Charles Bronfman, Seagram's co-chairman, is losing patience, prompting Edgar Sr. (the chairman) to become more protective of his hardworking, if hard-luck, son. (Who knew the opening of Universal's new *Twister* ride in Orlando would have to be delayed because a slew of real tornadoes decimated several Florida towns? Who knew the names Monica Lewinsky, Linda Tripp, and Kathleen Willey when *Primary Colors* went into production?)



From booze to boos: Embattled studio head Edgar Bronfman Jr.

And there's the side of the family that's still burned about the 1995 sale of Seagram's DuPont Co. stake to finance Edgar's studio lust (DuPont's stock soared while Universal's limped). Not to mention Bronfman's sale last fall of Universal's newly expanded television assets to Barry Diller. "Do you think the family doesn't get up every morning and check the quote on DuPont and then call up Edgar Jr. just to torture him about it?" asks one analyst. "These people are not the Waltons."

Rumor No. 2: The DreamWorks SKG trio were in Manhattan planning a takeover of Universal. *Reality check:* At the time, David Geffen was in Malibu, Steven Spielberg was in Washington, and Jeffrey Katzenberg was in his adobe office. When anyone asks them whether they're interested in Universal on any level, the articulated consensus is, "We'd rather have rectal cancer," as one of the troika puts it. One source insists that Geffen "still likes Edgar, but David is confused by what has gone on." Spielberg doesn't have Edgar Jr. on his radar (though Bronfman would dearly love for Spielberg to revive the near-dormant Amblin, co-producer with Universal of blockbusters like *Jurassic Park*). And Katzenberg doesn't need Universal's problems when he's got plenty of his own (building a home for the DreamWorks studio and producing a blockbuster, for starters). "Jeffrey's attitude is, there's a lot of dog shit in Universal's backyard," someone close to both situations told me. "They need to pick it up themselves."

ONE EXPLANATION FOR THE DREAMWORKS-takes-over-Universal rumor is that team Bronfman secretly asked DreamWorks to overhaul its home-video division. Ann Daly, the head of animation at DreamWorks and a former Disney executive, "was speechlessly appalled at what she found," an insider explains. "The home-video division was in the Dark Ages." Of course, DreamWorks had a strong incentive to help the division: self-interest. Revenue from animated movies depends heavily on home-video sales, and DreamWorks will need every dollar it can milk from the Christmas release of *Prince of Egypt,* which will be sold by Universal.

Diller has also been in discussions about having DreamWorks program a night of prime time for his USA Network Inc. As it happens, a similar idea

Photograph by Jim Graham/Saba.

Something's coming to New York this Summer...

was floated at Universal less than a year after Seagram took control. That scenario called for Universal to program one full night of prime time for CBS, thus guaranteeing the studio placement for its shows. In fact, few people know that Bronfman's deal with Diller was actually Plan B, CBS having been Plan A. Intent on creating a cable-network empire of their own, Bronfman and Biondi tried to convince CBS's parent, Westinghouse Electric, to sell Universal two newly acquired cable channels, the Nashville Network and Country Music Television. Disinclined to manage the assets itself, CBS was seriously considering the sale when the broadcaster discovered a whopping tax liability if it unloaded the channels less than a year after having bought them. Edgar could have waited a few months but didn't. With his stock spiraling downward, he felt he needed to make a bold move. So he headed straight for Barry Diller.

The Diller deal focused the klieg lights on Bronfman. Then came the unexpected, back-to-back tanking of *Primary Colors* and *Mercury Rising*. And then Edgar stunned a gathering of top entertainment executives and journalists at the *Variety*/Schroder "Big Picture" conference in March when he opined that moviegoers should pay higher ticket prices for big-budget movies. But it was the firings that put Universal in the hot seat. The ouster of marketing heads Buffy Shutt and Kathy Jones would hardly have rated a mention in the national press—except that just a few months earlier, Universal executives were whispering that Shutt would take over the reins at the studio. Instead, Universal Pictures chairman Casey Silver got a long-term contract and Shutt was out.

BRONFMAN'S MOST TRUSTED ADVISERS include his father and uncle; Barry Diller; and few others. David Geffen used to be firmly situated at the center of his inner circle; it was Geffen, after all, who helped provide the sometime songwriter with a blueprint for rebuilding MCA-Universal's listless music division and for taking Interscope Records off Time Warner's fed-up hands. Their current estrangement can be traced back to Bronfman's insistence that Geffen be kept in the dark about the TV deal with Diller, who is Geffen's best friend. Needless to say, Geffen got sore.

Moreover, young billionaire Bronfman is not to the Hollywood manner born. He doesn't know how (or chooses not) to fawn, and out here, fawning

Things don't look good for the yard work.

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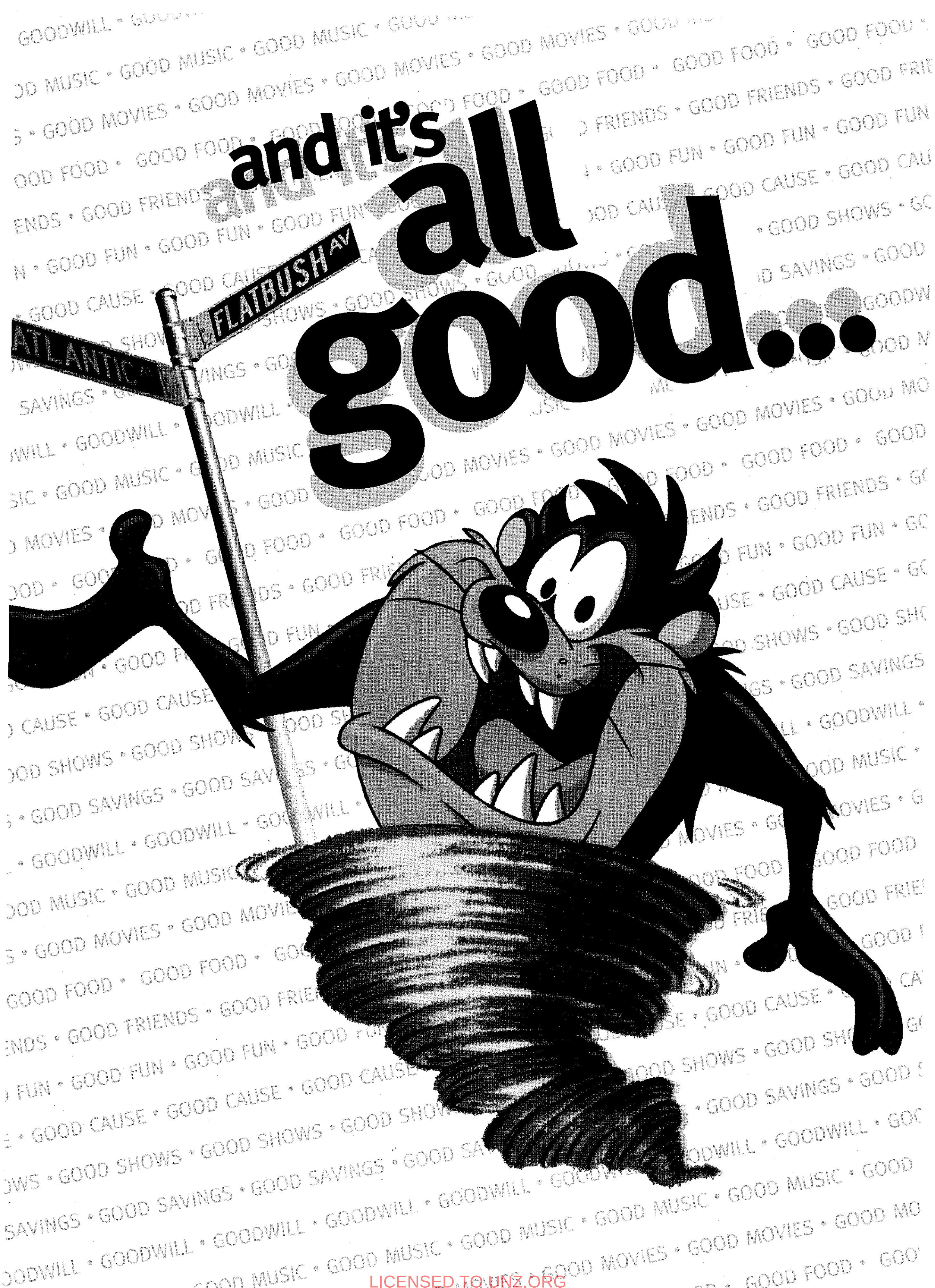
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is an essential management tool. Renowned for his charm, Bronfman nevertheless lost his cool with journalists this time around. One reason Michael Eisner has lasted so long in this town is that once journalists jump through hoops to get him on the phone, he's as winning as the Chicago Bulls.

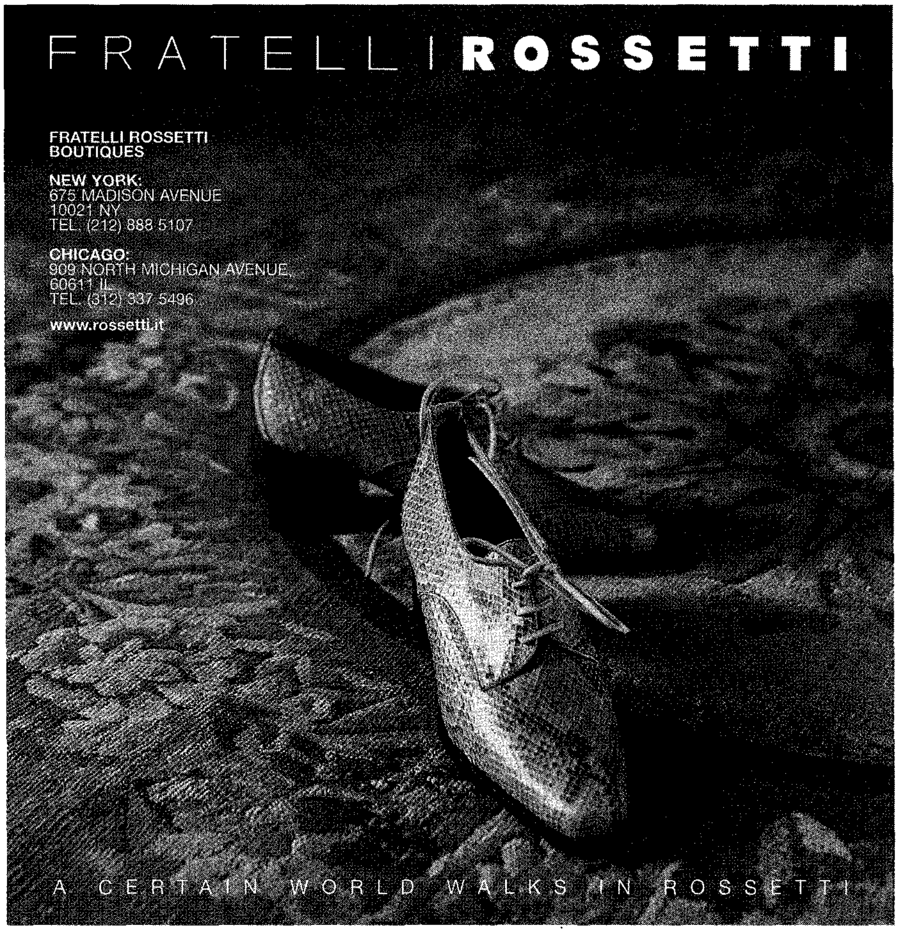
But the truth is, Universal is no more chaotic than, say, Warner Bros. at present. Both studios' releases are underperforming True, Warner's TV division is flush with cash (*ER* being one reason), but the music division is a mess. Time Warner's stock, like Seagram's, went into a coma years ago just as the market came alive. But now TW shares are trading at double the price of two years ago.

And as for a Sony situation in the making, forget it. Seagram is no Sony, and Universal is no Columbia TriStar. For one thing, there are those luscious theme parks being grown down in Florida, which will—and this is no exaggeration—give Disney pause. For another, there's no *Hit and Run*–style freewheeling (Biondi is a widely respected numbers guy), free spending (Meyer waved off his predecessor's chauffeur), or free fall (both men are boringly sane) of the kind that results in $3 billion write-downs.

Also—despite ex-president and -COO Sid Sheinberg's statements to the contrary ("That big-mouth dope," Meyer told colleagues)—Bronfman bought a real fixer-upper. Not only was Universal in a state of disrepair under previous management, but for over a decade, the studio's movies were more miss than hit, saved by blockbusters from Amblin and Imagine.

After a year of family time in Malibu culminating in the birth of his twins, Edgar and his brood are just weeks away from returning full-time to Manhattan, where the renovation of his Upper East Side townhouse is finally nearing completion. Bronfman, Biondi, and Meyer would do well to stop worrying about building a company of team players; the truth is, Hollywood thrives under autocrats. By November, the first of what should be a respectable, possibly stellar slate of pictures will open in time for Christmas. More distribution deals are in the offing as well. And by year's end the music division will finish either No. 1 or No. 2 in the industry.

Maybe that's why Meyer bought a fresh copy of the *Times* cartoon after he'd thrown away his first paper in disgust. Now it's stashed in a safe place. "Because someday," he told a colleague, "I'll look at it and laugh." ■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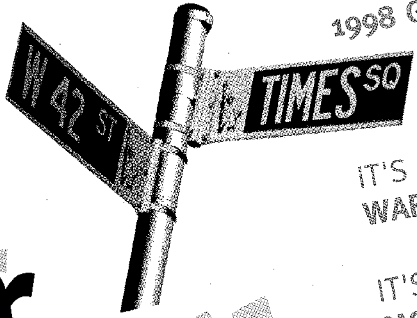

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CITYSCAPE KARRIE JACOBS

Rudy's Secret Plans

From Wall Street to Yankee Stadium to the Coliseum Site, Mayor Giuliani leaves the public out of the urban planning process.

ONLY TWO YEARS AGO, WITH Wall Street's traditional businesses downsizing and moving to midtown, the financial district seeemed to be on the verge of becoming a more architecturally imposing Park Slope, full of young couples and baby carriages. And unlike in Park Slope, people could walk to their jobs at a new crop of Silicon Alley start-ups that would colonize the spaces so recently vacated by bankers.

The Giuliani administration gets the credit for dreaming this lovely dream, the nuts and bolts of which were laid out in 1994, in the "Plan for the Revitalization of Lower Manhattan." The plan is the best piece of urban planning—arguably the only piece of urban planning—the mayor has yet publicly put forth. By the early-to mid nineties, the financial district had been gutted by the effects of the 1987 stock market crash and the construction of more attractive office space in Battery Park City, Jersey City, and beyond. Lower Manhattan's office-vacancy rate was pushing 25 percent. The atmosphere of the district's narrow streets was crepuscular. No one imagined that the bankers would ever come back.

And so in October 1995, the plan was implemented. A menu of tax abatements and incentives was offered to developers who converted old office towers into residential buildings or renovated and leased commercial space. Inspired by William Rudin's success at turning the vacant 55 Broad into a hothouse for cyber business, a special program was established to attract small high-tech firms to form an "Information Technology District." These wired firms were "pioneers in the ongoing revitalization of Downtown into a 24-hour, 21st Century global community," a statement issued by the Alliance for Downtown New York, the local BID, breathlessly proclaimed. "I think it will become hip," predicted Carl Weisbrod, president of the Alliance. "I think ten years from now, this will be the most exciting neighborhood in the city."

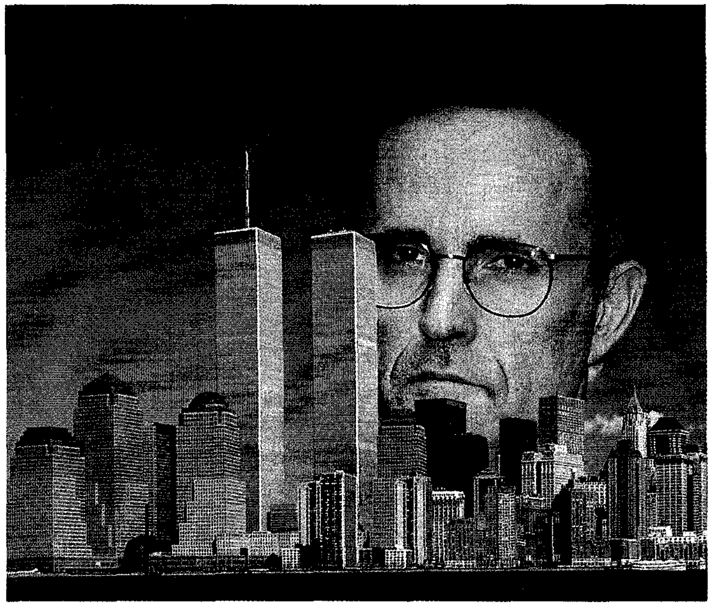
And indeed, the financial district became, not hip exactly, but certainly less gray. The incentives were a great success. Donald Trump, buoyed by tax breaks, was renovating 40 Wall in grand style. The Cipriani family and the Ritz-Carlton chain were bidding on monumental relics to turn into plush hotels. Half a dozen buildings were rewired and marketed as "Plug n' Go" offices for high-tech start-up firms. And by mid-April, 3,860 units of housing were completed, under construction, or slated for the near future.

In short, the Giuliani administration had done something right, something nice, even, something that didn't involve bullying, barricades, or the handing out of summonses. And the most visible symbol of this niceness is the Exchange, a handsome 1896 building at 25 Broad that was the first residential conversion under the incentives plan. Nearly all the building's 345 apartments are full. Behind brand-new micro blinds, the windows emit a homey glow, a warm light that whispers "quality of life."

Niceness, however, tends to disappear rather quickly when real money is involved. And as the boom has continued, companies shut out by the tight market for commercial space in midtown are again looking downtown. In September of last year, the Witkoff Group, two days into the process of framing apartments in the open-plan floors of an unlovely seventies glass office tower, 10 Hanover Square, rented it out, top to bottom, to Goldman, Sachs. In January, 60 Broad Street, the asbestos-choked former home of Drexel Burnham Lambert, where the upper floors were supposedly being converted to spectacular residential lofts, was sold to a partnership intent on "upgrading and repositioning the building as one of the premier corporate centers in the financial district." Articles began to appear about a shortage of office space in lower Manhattan.

And then there's the New York Stock Exchange, relentlessly bullish and desperate to expand. Three years ago, exchange president Richard Grasso could have played spin the bottle in the middle of Broad Street and taken over practically any property at which the bottle pointed. But then, three years ago, the Dow Jones wasn't at 9,200. Last year, the NYSE proposed enlarging its trading floor by building an atrium across Broad, blocking the street and connecting the stock exchange's landmark headquarters with the J.P. Morgan offices across the way. Preservationists were horrified, and the idea quietly died.

But at the end of March, reports of a new plan came to light. This scheme, described in two newspapers by unnamed sources, calls for maintaining the exchange's offices in the old building and assembling space for a massive new trading floor a block south, on a site bound by Broad and William Streets, between



Photographs: Liz Gilbert/Sygma (Giuliani); FPG (skyline).

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Exchange Place and Beaver Street. The site could be put together from a 20,000-square-foot parking lot on William, plus the lots currently occupied by 40 Exchange, 41 Broad, and 25 Broad. That's 25 Broad, the flagship residential conversion of the Giuliani administration's plan to revive lower Manhattan.

More recently, unnamed sources told the New York *Times* that NYSE, frustrated by the complexities of expanding within the newly revitalized financial district, might pull out and build as big as it pleases in Battery Park City.

Of course, this is all scuttlebutt, rumors generated by public officials who are afraid to speak on the record, gossip disseminated by secondhand sources. But that is how things are done in Rudy Giuliani's New York. Development projects, big and small, often involving publicly owned property or public funds are discussed behind closed doors, so the public has no way to know what's going on.

Peg Breen, president of the New York Landmarks Conservancy, argues that the expansion of the stock exchange and the future of the financial district "is something the entire city is interested in." And no one, she points out, besides the NYSE and Deputy Mayor Randy Levine's office knows exactly why, for example, the Morgan building directly across Broad from the NYSE is considered too small, or why the undistinguished buildings that line the west side of Broad, south of the stock exchange, are not seen as options, or why a plan that involves condemning 25 Broad, home to more than 300 families, might be considered the best alternative. "I don't know who has ever seen those plans," says Breen.

Deputy Mayor Levine's spokesman deflected an interview request, saying, "We are not actually commenting on this issue right now." City Planning Commissioner Joseph Rose's spokeswoman says that Rose can't comment and suggests talking to Levine. Richard Ellis, a Realtor who is, according to *Real Estate Weekly,* "shepherding" the NYSE's search, acknowledges working with the stock exchange but declines to say more because "I get all kinds of screamed at."

Even though 25 Broad was designated a landmark by both the state and federal governments—it was added to New York State's Register of Historic Places in March and the National Register of Historic Places in April—it can still be condemned and demolished. However if state or federal funds are involved, a public review process would be mandated by law. And there's no room in the Giuliani administration's notion of urban planning, such as it is, for such scrutiny. The NYSE doesn't seem to relish the idea either, which might be why it's—reportedly—considering Battery Park City.

Public reaction, to the extent that there can be public reaction to something that's officially secret, has been relatively sanguine. Oddly, the developers who have invested in the area don't believe that condemning 25 Broad, after a $100 million restoration, is crazy. "It's a viable block to assemble," reasons Tony Goldman, owner of the Wall Street Kitchen and Bar. "My only concern is that they don't disrupt the architecture or the street pattern." Goldman suggests that the exchange could maintain the integrity of the district by erecting a brand-new building behind the existing historic façades.

No one, from preservationist Breen to real-estate executive Raymond O'Keefe, president of the New York office of Grub & Ellis, questions NYSE's call for Lebensraum. The stock exchange is this city's economic heart, and if it needs to

Although there's something to be said for getting ahead, the new Navigator has more to do with getting away. And taking life's luxuries with you.

LINCOLN

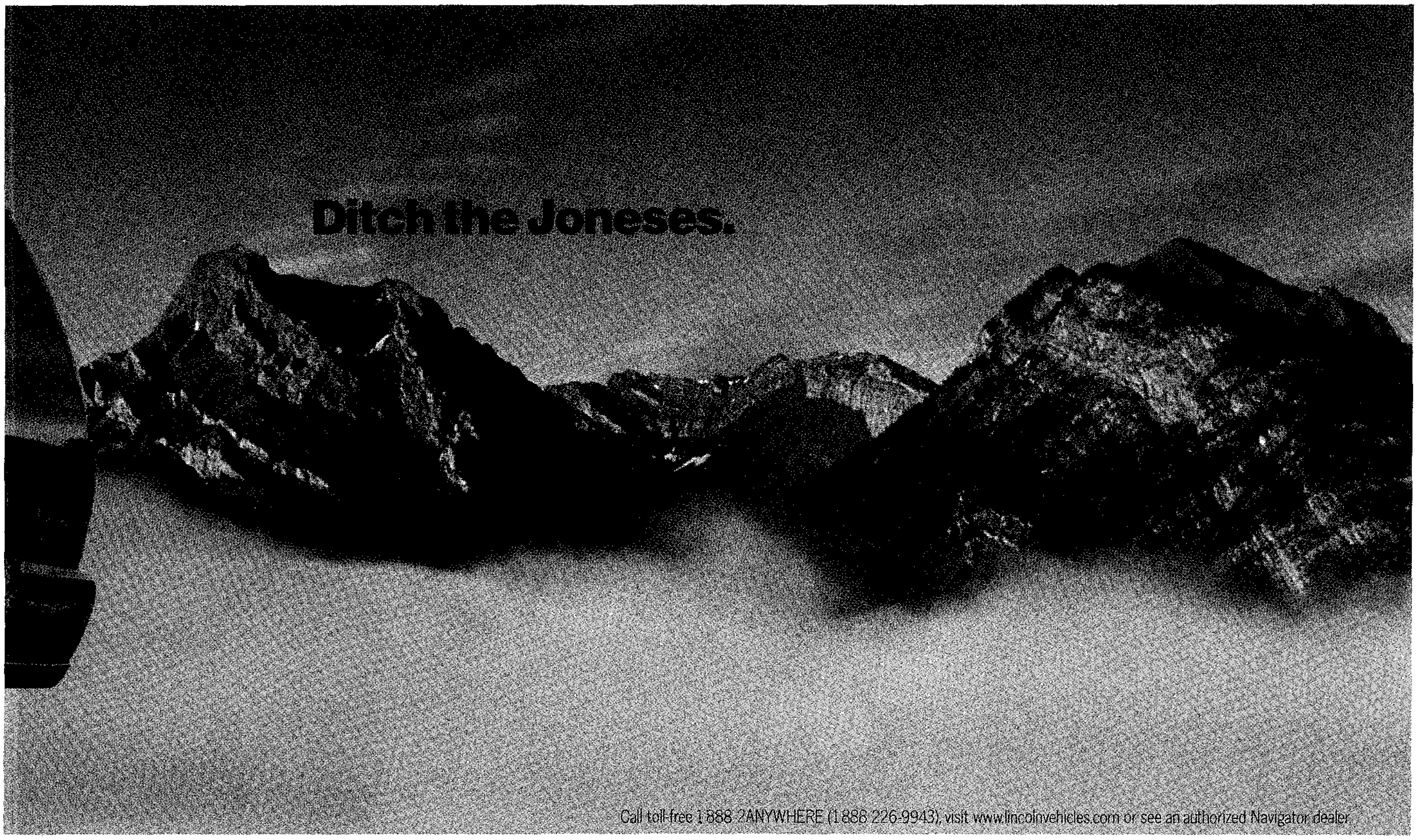
grow, space must be found. Still, even with the volume of trade soaring and the leading indicators going up, up, up, the need for more square footage is not self-evident. Granted, there are now 626.4 million shares traded a day, compared to 514.6 million a year ago. And if the NYSE positions itself as a global marketplace, its membership—and its trading hours—could easily triple. However, more trading doesn't necessarily require added floor space, since transactions are heavily computerized. But one of the ways that NYSE differentiates itself from its rival NASDAQ is that it has a trading floor crammed with buyers and sellers—the thronged concourse is a key component of the NYSE's image. Even if an ever-increasing volume of shares doesn't require more warm bodies, a bigger, less obstructed, more modern floor would underscore the NYSE's pre-eminent position in the world's economy.

Admittedly, demolishing 25 Broad, where tenants pay upwards of $2,200 a month in rent, is not the same as bulldozing low-income housing. The displaced residents will land on their feet. Developer Bruce Menin—who has been conspicuously silent on this matter—will be well compensated for his losses. But his elegantly restored building represents more than a collection of upscale apartments. It's a symbol of the successful recovery of the financial district from a malaise for which the financial industry bears a large measure of responsibility.

The financial district, up until the Giuliani revitalization plan kicked in, was a company town, its character and livelihood dictated by one industry. The plan introduced a modicum of diversity. While it would be a mistake to underestimate the NYSE's centrality in the economic health of Lower Manhattan or the city as a whole, it would be short-sighted to place the power of eminent domain at the disposal of the stock exchange. The fickleness of the financial industry almost killed this neighborhood once. Why give it license to try again?

Why? Because this is the way of the barricade builder: arbitrary, secretive and graceless. This is the unimaginative approach of the mayor who looks at Governors Island, the most awe-inspiring opportunity to come along in a century, and declares, "Casino." This is the mayor who single-handedly appropriates a revenue stream to build two baseball stadiums without considering where those stadiums might go. This is the mayor who plans by fiat, halting the MTA's process of choosing a Coliseum-site developer to demand that a theater be included. We've learned the hard way that planning by edict doesn't work. It's how we lost the old Penn Station. At a moment when the city, flush with capital, should be building with vision and confidence, there is, instead, a holding pattern. The Hudson River Park, the Port Authority's light-rail link from Kennedy airport to the LIRR and the subway, the street-furniture program that promised to deliver public toilets and architect-designed bus shelters—they are all lost somewhere in the windowless room that is the Giuliani administration.

And if the New York Stock Exchange gives up on leveraging itself some new property in the heart of the financial district and moves to Battery Park City (or takes advantage of a swell site that's about to open up in the Bronx—convenient to the Upper East Side and Westchester), the abandoned Roman temple at the corner of Wall and Broad could figure into another one of the mayor's pet schemes: It would make a terrific Home Depot store.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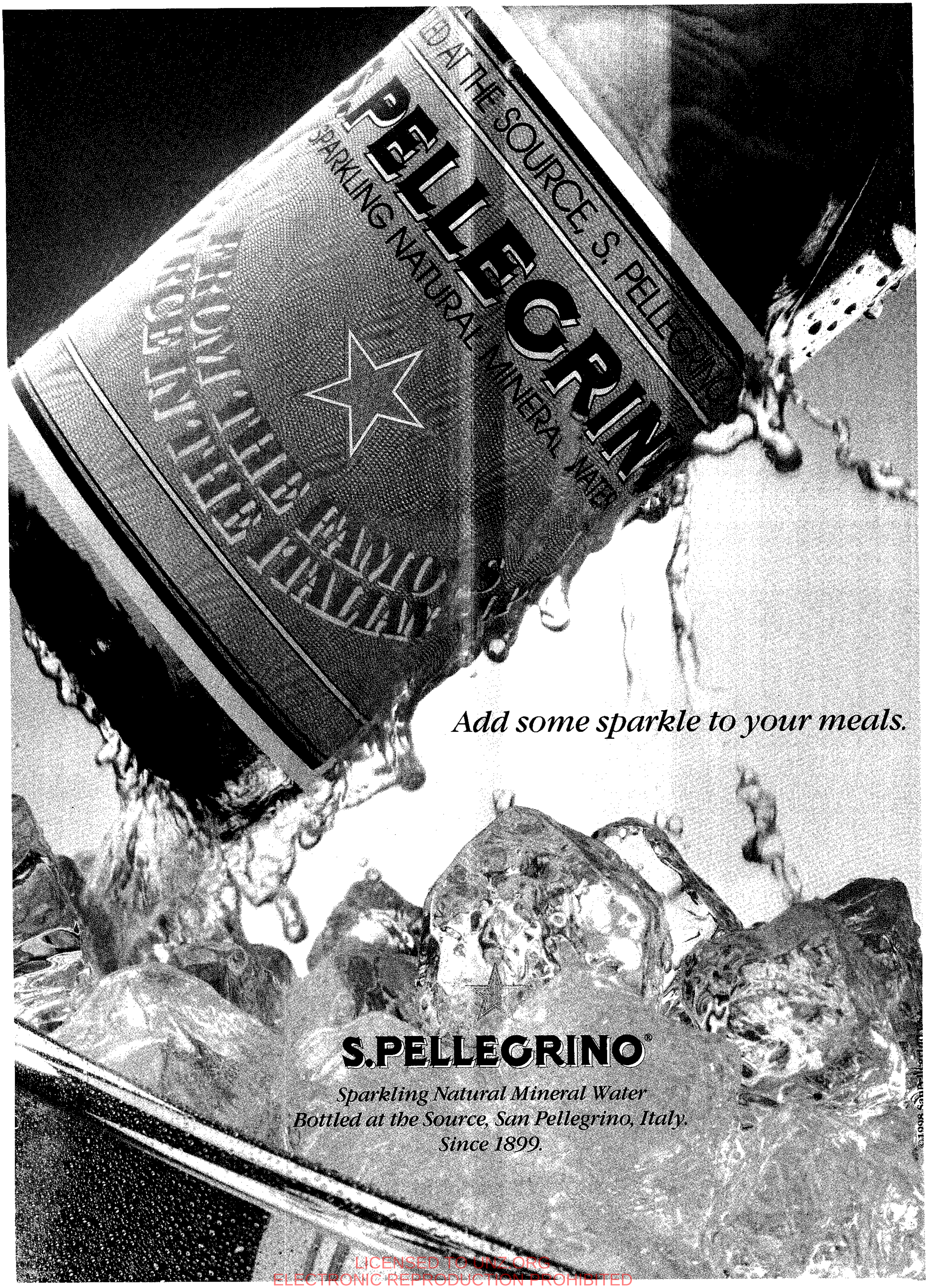
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NEW YORK

We left no manhole covered, no city block unscoured, in our singular quest to find everything you ever wanted to do or buy or play or see or wear or eat or study, and a whole lot more that you never even knew existed. (A museum of graffiti? A stiletto-repair service? And then there's the doggie day spa. . . .) Each of the following items, from documentary film to men's underwear—especially the men's underwear—was subjected to the harshest conditions in the world-famous *New York* Magazine test labs and held to excruciating standards by our crackerjack panel of experts. Painstakingly watching every p and q, we prepared this final report, which we now turn over to you. ►

best OF NEW YORK

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Contributors: Mike Albo, Kate Aurthur, Connell Barrett, Tom Beaujour, Joe Berinato, Sarah Bernard, Paula Bernstein, Christopher Bonanos, John Bowe, Marisa Bowe, Jamie Bryan, Rene Chun, Ondine Cohane, Kate Coyne, David Denby, Susan Dominus, Simon Dumenco, Maura Egan, Barbara Ensor, Patricia Falvo, Brian Farnham, Amy Feitelberg, Adam Fisher, Steve Garbarino, Jon Gertner, Gail Glickman Horwood, Gael Greene, Vanessa Grigoriadis, Linda Hall, Sebastian Hardy, Manny Howard, Frederick Ilchman, Steven Jenkins, Heidi Julavits, Meredith Kahn, Peter Kaminsky, Brett Kelly, Hunter Kennedy, Beth Landman Keil, Alexandra Lange, Laura Larson, Ariel Levy, Dany Levy, Jacob Lewis, Ned Martel, Nick Meyer, Edith Newhall, Brian Parks, Rob Patronite, Michael Picón, Corky Pollan, Karen Rabinowitz, Robin Raisfeld, Andrew Rosenberg, Maer Roshan, Melanie Ross, Hal Rubenstein, Sarah Saffian, Nancy Jo Sales, Stephanie Saulmon, Jennifer Senior, Rob Shea, Ethan Smith, Ivan Solotaroff, Michael Steele, Tim Struby, Rebecca Sumner Burgos, Michael Tomasky, Norman Vanamee, Alex Williams, Andy Young.

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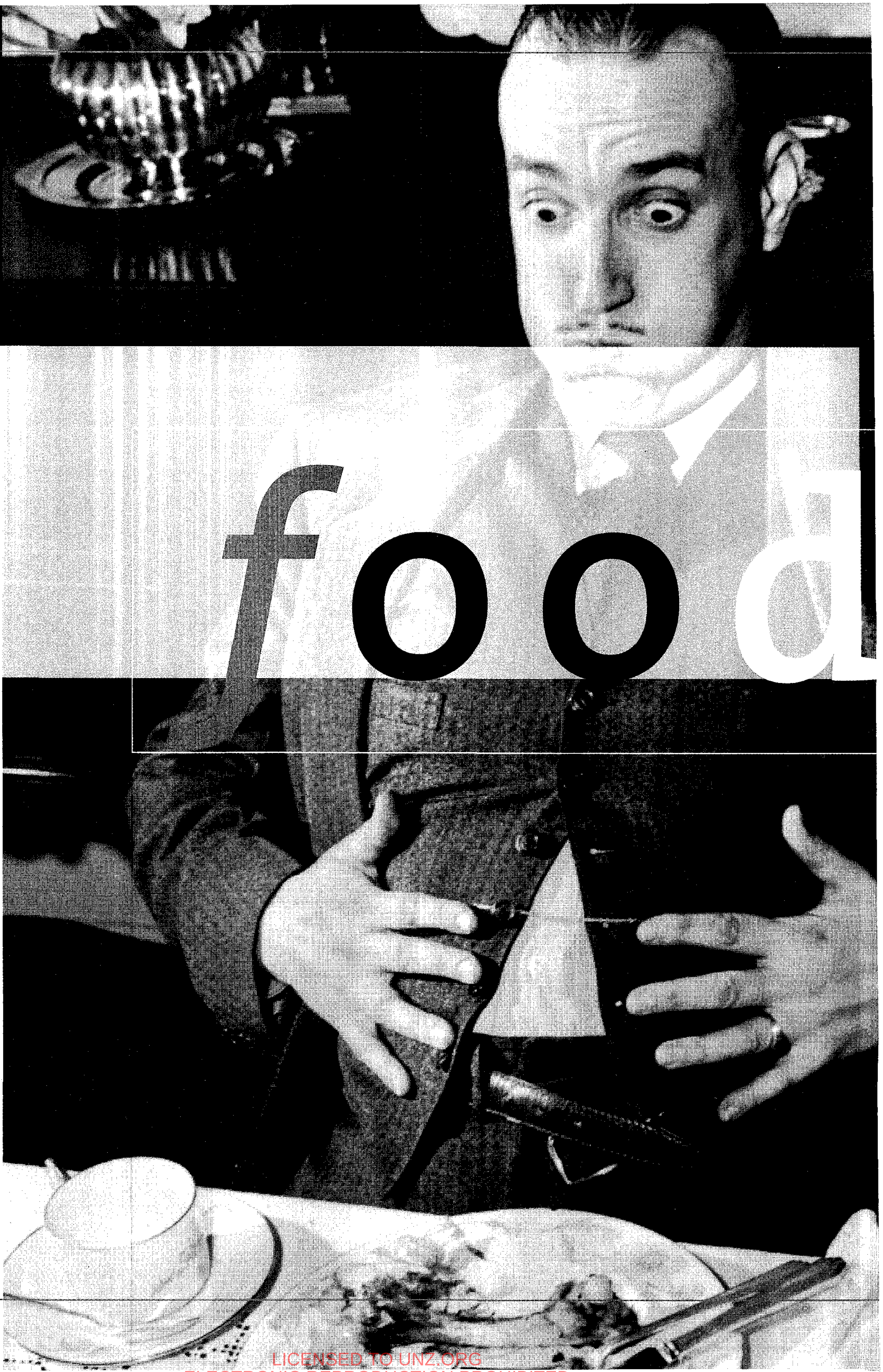

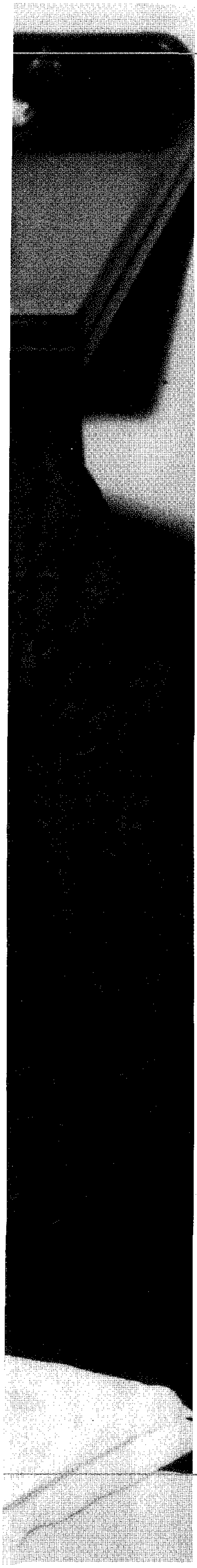

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TEAR INTO A STACK OF BLUEBERRY PANCAKES, STARE DOWN YOUR FISH DINNER AT ELIAS CORNER, AND MEET YOUR BLIND DATE AT BOUGHALEM.

BREAKFAST

FIFTY SEVEN FIFTY SEVEN 57 EAST 57TH STREET; 758-5757

Four Seasons Hotel's Fifty Seven Fifty Seven restaurant serves the sort of morning food that can (and regularly does) coax an appetite out of rail-thin actresses passing through on press junkets. In addition to her justly famous lemon-ricotta hotcakes, Chef Susan Weaver produces an insanely rich cinnamon "coffee cake" French toast with raisin-pear compote and a stunning bagel-and-lox platter with dilled quail eggs. The menu also offers low-fat selections like goat's-milk yogurt, egg-white frittatas, and the $32 salmon-and-seaweed "Japanese breakfast." If you're really hankering for a Krispy Kreme glazed donut, come back for brunch on the weekend, when the bread basket's full of them.

BACON

THE KITCHENETTE 80 WEST BROADWAY; 267-6740

In the chemistry of bacon, there is one hard-to-swallow rule: Fat dictates flavor. You can send curls of smoke from the embers of exotic trees across any bacon strip, but without the lipids, the taste will be limp. No one understands this better than the griddlemasters at TriBeCa's Kitchenette. Their bacon has a smoky essence that trips the salt and sweet sensors of any palate. Honorable mention goes to Drovers Tap Room (9 Jones Street; 627-1233; open for Saturday and Sunday brunch), where the chefs send out a multi-tiered composition with a Smithfield-ham-like top layer and a Canadian-bacon bottom layer, separated by an all-important divider of gristle. Fatter is phatter.

CAPPUCCINO

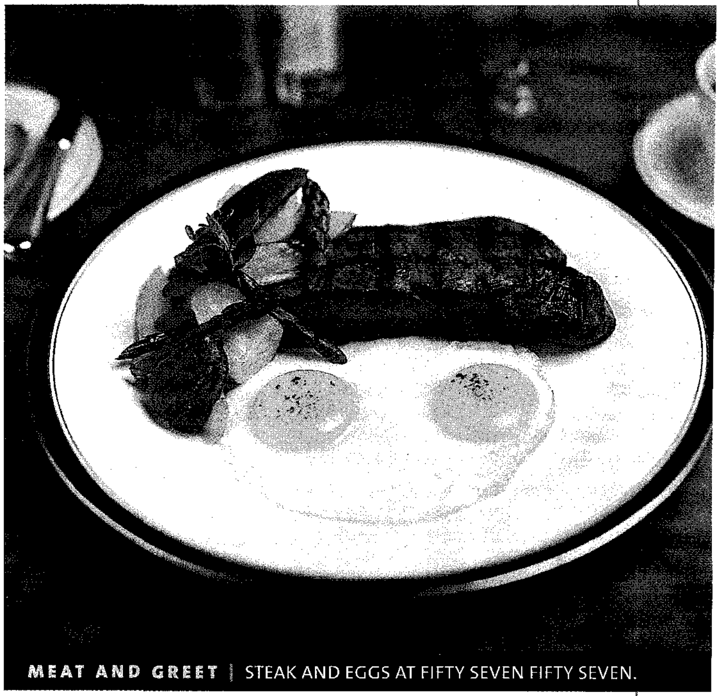
SANT AMBROEUS 1000 MADISON AVENUE, AT 78TH STREET; 570-2211

Dislocated Florentines, Milanese, and Romans will come to blows over the merits of their hometown soccer teams, but Italian expats in New York are unanimous on at least one subject—where to find a good cappuccino in town. A small space on the Upper East Side, Sant Ambroeus essentially reproduces an Italian coffee bar, with a (not bad, though pricey) restaurant in back. The highest-quality espresso is topped with a nearly knuckle-deep layer of carefully steamed foam. Stand at the bar Italian-style and watch decades of technical expertise in action. Just don't ask for it to go. "You wanna keep the standard high?" says manager Paolo Della Puppa. "You gotta drink it here."

PANCAKES

THE VINEGAR FACTORY 431 EAST 91ST STREET; 628-9608

Bagels and lox are such an unassailable standard that it's easy to overlook other brunch possibilities like pancakes—especially since so many flapjacks are nothing more than bland syrup-sponges. But at Eli Zabar's Vinegar Factory (see also "Gourmet-Food Shop"), the crispy-edged, buttery pancakes offered on the weekend brunch menu do the griddle proud. The batter, accented with buttermilk, corn flour, and whole-wheat flour, has a complex personality all its own, and the marble-size blueberries are so robust they out-sweet the syrup. Occasionally, the chef will offer strawberry, banana, or apple pancakes, but "we don't do anything fancy, like mangoes," says chef Keith Eldridge.



MEAT AND GREET | STEAK AND EGGS AT FIFTY SEVEN FIFTY SEVEN.

Photograph by Steven Freeman.

food

"At the Vinegar Factory, we're not trying to reinvent the wheel."

LIGHT LUNCH

SOTHEBY'S CAFE 1334 YORK AVENUE, AT 72ND STREET; 606-7000

The sandwiches, soups, and salads by Jean-Georges Vongerichten at Sotheby's Cafe sure are delicious, but they're technically fakes. The chef only developed the menu. Fortunately, the forgeries are churned out by Tentation Catering, which admirably executes his bold visions like citrus-cured salmon with herbed Boursin and cucumber on toasted black bread, fresh marine-crab-salad sandwich on a sourdough roll with chipotle mayo, and a house salad of mesclun greens with warm asparagus, endive, tomatoes, and herbed goat cheese drizzled with truffle vinaigrette. By Jean-Georges standards, the prices are quite reasonable—who would say no to a $7.50 watermelon-and-goat-cheese salad? A nice bonus is that the café's décor, with its pristine white walls, potted palms, and framed Warhol prints, is so elegantly clean and airy it seems to cut the calorie count by a third.

KING SALMON $5.99 LB
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MAHI MAHI STEAK $3.99
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MAKO SHARK $2.99
FRESH SALMON STEAKS $5.49

RAW DEAL | THE FINEST FILLETS FROM THE SEA ARE AT CENTRAL FISH.

NO-RETURN-TO-WORK LUNCH

DANIEL 20 EAST 76TH STREET; 288-0033

The three-martini lunch has become about as socially acceptable as the three-martini Ford Explorer joyride. But that doesn't mean we haven't found alternate means to bollix up a perfectly good Friday afternoon. Consider lunch chez Daniel, where Daniel Bouloud offers some truly afternoon-killing fare: a hazardous prix fixe menu ($35) as well as a treacherous six-course and a nearly homicidal eight-course degustation menu ($65 and $95, respectively). One day's assault will start with the Jerusalem-artichoke soup with duck prosciutto, followed by ravioli of spring peas and a fondue of seasonal vegetables. Before you can regain your bearings, Bouloud brings out the big guns: the roasted Maine halibut in a broth of parsley, herbs, clams, mussels, and watercress or his roasted Cornish hen with glazed carrots, onions, shiitake mushrooms, and spinach. Then he mercilessly finishes you off with the Gascogne apple tart with armagnac-and-honey ice cream flavored with pine. The effect is gloriously soporific. And as long as the boss is already off for the country, maybe we *will* see the list of dessert wines. . .

FRESH FISH

CENTRAL FISH 527 NINTH AVENUE, AT 39TH STREET; 279-2317

You certainly can't turn up your nose at the precious offerings of Citarella and Rosedale. Nor should you dismiss the Chinatown curbside markets, where bargains abound if you know what to look for. But Central Fish manages to combine the impeccable quality of the uptown seafood emporiums with the prices of Chinatown's fishmongers. On a recent morning, for example, Central's tuna was going for $4.99 a pound, as opposed to Citarella's $13.99 and Rosedale's $16.50. And nobody knows fish better—Central employees act as if they'd reeled 'em in themselves.

TUNA SANDWICH

MELAMPO IMPORTED FOODS
105 SULLIVAN STREET; 334-9530

Much has been made over the years of the notoriously temperamental Alessandro Gualandi's sandwich-making prowess: his prosciutto, his smoked chicken, his mozzarella and focaccia, and his secret-recipe Alessandro dressing. Yet tuna may be his greatest achievement of all. Five of Gualandi's meticulously constructed sandwiches feature imported tuna, which he slathers onto home-baked sandwich loaves. For our current favorite, the Daniella, the maestro drapes the fish with several slabs of fresh mozzarella, a bundle of pristine arugula leaves, and several spoonfuls of hot-pepper dressing. The combination, like the three dozen other concoctions on his menu, is perfect. Good thing, too, because woe be to the rube who asks for a substitution or some Hellman's.

LOBSTER ROLL

PEARL OYSTER BAR 18 CORNELIA STREET; 691-8211

There's a secret behind the lobster roll at Pearl Oyster Bar, and that secret is Pepperidge Farm. "We thought about having Amy's Breads, or maybe Tomcat, do the bread for us. They just couldn't duplicate that sweetness," says Mary

Photograph by Bernd Auers.

THE SCOOP | THE HOT-FUDGE SUNDAE AT BROOKLYN DINER USA.

Redding, late of Bolo, who opened this stylish, narrow oyster nook nine months ago with Rebecca Charles, formerly of Cascabel. So the two finagled a deal to procure the same Pepperidge Farm buns featured in roadside dives on the New England coast. "It's just hunks of lobster meat with mayonnaise, celery, lemon juice, salt, and pepper," Charles says of their $13 sandwich. "It's not New York; it's pure and simple."

SANDWICH BREAD

SULLIVAN STREET BAKERY 73 SULLIVAN STREET; 334 9435

The ideal sandwich bread should not be excessively doughy. It should provide a textural balance to the fillings without collapsing under their weight or dissolving into mush from aggressive dressing. Sullivan Street Bakery's flour-dusted ciabatta rolls so expertly meet these criteria that they can be found at sandwich joints all over town. The bread's distinguishing feature, according to Sullivan owner Jim Lahey, is its crust-to-crumb ratio. "The crumb is not too dense, which makes it large in respect to its weight," says Lahey. "It's a foil for what's inside."

ICE-CREAM SUNDAE

BROOKLYN DINER USA 212 WEST 57TH STREET; 977-2280

The archetypal ice-cream sundae doesn't benefit from overwrought presentation. But don't tell that to the folks at Brooklyn Diner USA—they already know. They pack their milky-sweet vanilla Sedutto into a tapered sundae glass, then flood it with luscious hot fudge and walnuts. A puff of whipped cream and a single maraschino cherry finish the job. A trick of the chocoholic trade: Ask for the fudge on the side, so you have some extra for those chocolate-free patches in the middle of the glass.

BLIND-DATE RESTAURANT

BOUGHALEM 14 BEDFORD STREET; 414-4764

Setting is the crucial determining factor of a blind date's success: If the person you're being set up with picks a lame spot, cancel right off the bat. If you can agree on a properly stylish locale, though, you can at least be assured of a pleasant milieu in which to contemplate the inanity of the whole ritual. Boughalem, which opened in March, is charming but not precious. The slate bar up front is perfect for a tête-à-tête—as long as you arrive before the place's ever-growing fan club does. The lighting's even flattering enough to make your aunt's neighbor's office-mate's kid look like a reasonable prospect.

CHEESE-COUNTERMAN

FRANK MEILAK, MURRAY'S CHEESE SHOP
257 BLEECKER STREET; 243-3289

Now that we've weaned ourselves off Velveeta, we need a cheesemonger to guide us smoothly through the complexities of le monde du fromage. Part salesman, part scholar: someone versed in the subtle variations of Tuscan sheep's milk, who can surmise the exact provenance of a disk of Reblochon in a single sniff. Such a man is Frank Meilak of Murray's Cheese, our ideal purveyor. He's friendly and helpful, and he possesses exceedingly good taste. When Jean-Georges Vongerichten and Le Bernardin's Eric Ripert occasionally need to supplement their stock, they turn to Meilak. Max McCalman, Picholine's celebrated fromager, also slips in for his personal stash. "When I shop for cheese," he says, "I look to see if it's happy or sad. Murray's keeps their cheese happy."

FRIED CHICKEN

LOLA 30 WEST 22ND STREET; 675-6700

Purists will hate us for this. They'll hate us for not honoring one of the city's countless bastions of down-home southern-style food, from fixtures like Harlem's Londel's and M&G Diner to upstarts like Soul Fixins' and Mama's. All of them do a more-than-respectable fried chicken. The problem is, you can barely tell them apart. Our selection is a bird of a different flavor. Lola's fried chicken ($22.50) is doctored with an incendiary mix of Hungarian and Spanish paprika, black pepper, mushroom soy sauce, and Tabasco; then it's fried until golden and baked until extra-crispy, blistered, and almost blackened. A tomatillo sauce with cilantro and vinegar is a soothing balm, and the refreshingly nontraditional sides of black beans and sticky rice make the perfect earthy counterpoint.

GOURMET STORE

THE VINEGAR FACTORY 431 EAST 91ST STREET; 987-0885

We like to think of the Vinegar Factory as Eli Zabar's atonement for the sins of

Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

A COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY GUIDE TO THE BEST ASIAN FOOD

Continental Dining

We begin with the maligned Sichuan cuisine, in which the reliance on red chili pepper has earned it the unfair reputation of being blistering hot and little else. Sichuan partisans claim that the pepper enlivens the palate, and that's certainly how it plays out at **1 The Grand Sichuan Chinese Restaurant**. Look carefully—the demure yellow façade is easy to miss. To supplement their current offerings like boneless tea-smoked duck and dry-sautéed four-season string beans, the charming proprietors have recently instituted a new menu called Chinese Food Mao Style, which includes some of the Chairman's favorite Hunan dishes: braised pork and chestnut in brown sauce, sautéed duck and bitter melon, and steamed river fish. Honorable mention: Golden Monkey (133-47 Roosevelt Avenue, Flushing; 718-762-2664).

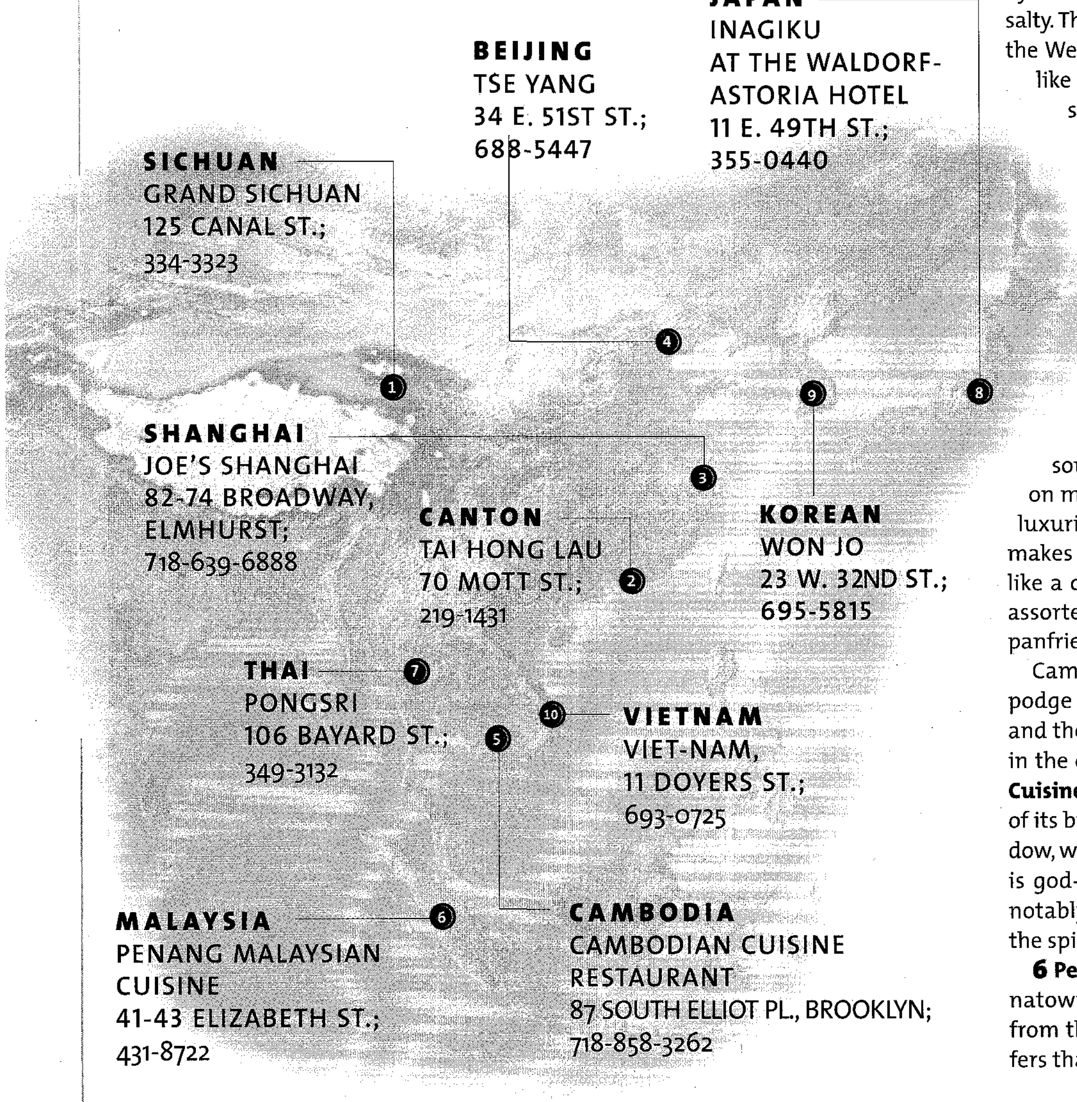
The focus of Cantonese cooking is the freshness of the food, not the seasoning. That's because the verdant Pearl River delta is an abundant source of fruits, vegetables, and fish. The cuisine can suffer if the ingredients aren't prime, but that's not a problem at **2 Tai Hong Lau**. Start with the vegetable dumplings and the panfried noodles. The lobster in ginger sauce makes a delicate second dish. The Cantonese perfected the art of stir-fry, and it's in evidence here. Try the beef with red pepper. Another regional specialty is the monstrous steamed oysters with black-bean sauce.

In Shanghai, the eastern region that includes Hong Kong, the cuisine relies heavily on seafood and tends to be oily and salty. That's made it a bit of a hard sell in the West. Nonetheless, signature dishes like soup dumplings have been absorbed into other regional cuisines. Your best local option: the landmark Queens branch of **3 Joe's Shanghai**. Honorable mention: New Shanghai Seafood Restaurant (133-57 Roosevelt Avenue, Queens; 718-886-7830).

The cuisine of the Northern Provinces, including Beijing and the vast Gobi Desert, lacks the sophistication of their southern neighbors', relying heavily on mutton and noodles. That said, the luxuriously appointed **4 Tse Yang** makes rudimentary ingredients seem like a culinary breakthrough. Order the assorted dumplings and the delicious panfried sea bass.

Cambodian food is a spicy hodgepodge of curries, salads, and stir-frys, and there's only one place you can get it in the city—Fort Greene's **5 Cambodian Cuisine Restaurant**. The place does most of its business through the takeout window, which is fortunate since the service is god-awful. The food is much better, notably the chopped-meat salads and the spicy chicken wings.

6 Penang Malaysian Cuisine. The Chinatown branch of Penang—stay away from the one on Spring Street—still offers that surprising array of Asian tradi-



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ELMHURST;
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KOREAN
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THAI
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106 BAYARD ST.;
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VIETNAM
VIET-NAM,
11 DOYERS ST.;
693-0725

MALAYSIA
PENANG MALAYSIAN
CUISINE
41-43 ELIZABETH ST.;
431-8722

CAMBODIA
CAMBODIAN CUISINE
RESTAURANT
87 SOUTH ELLIOT PL., BROOKLYN;
718-858-3262

tions that typifies Malaysian cooking. Try the mixed pickled vegetables, golden spare ribs, and barbecued whole fish in a banana leaf. If you're feeling brave, the deep-fried chitterlings are great.

Hard by the Tombs, **7 Pongsri Thai Restaurant** is a favorite lunchtime haunt for court workers and cops who go there to feast on complex, mountainous satays and soups renowned for subtle elements—lime, lemongrass, and cilantro. Taste the Tom Yum Koong, a fiery shrimp soup, and the deep-fried red snapper with a spicy tamarind-and-green-chili sauce.

In a city where Japanese food has become synonymous with sushi, **8 Inagiku** provides a welcome breather. The tourist-tested wait staff will tell you to sample eel napoleon layered with shiitake mushrooms and spinach, striped bass Arare coated in crunchy rice batter, and the flamboyantly priced Wagyu steak ($89). Make sure to sample the wide selection of sakes.

Plenty can go wrong for the first-timer in a Korean restaurant. If one strays from the narrow path of barbecued strip steak, there looms the threat of questionable scallops, Sea Legs, and organ meats. If you're not a game epicurean, you really have to know where to go. So head to **9 Won Jo Korean Restaurant**. The soups and stews are excellent (try the clam stew), and the kimchi is agreeably lively. In a corner of the restaurant world known for ill-tempered service, this is a friendly haven. Honorable mention: Kang Suh (1250 Broadway, at 32nd Street; 564-6845).

Literally a hole in the wall on a dogleg block in old Chinatown, **10 Viet-Nam** offers flawless standards: summer rolls, whole steamed fish, barbecued pork chops, and shrimp-and-pork salad. Unlike many of its contemporaries, Viet-Nam mixes traditions from the south (simple and spicy) and north (ornate gentility). There is also a wide variety of curries typical of central Vietnam. Honorable mention: New Pasteur (85 Baxter Street; 608-3656). MANNY HOWARD

his exorbitant E.A.T. The baguette tycoon has annexed most of an Upper East Side block with his bakery operation, a restaurant called Across the Street, VF News Cafe, and his megamarket, which has its own upstairs café (see "Pancakes") and a housewares department to rival Williams-Sonoma. What we admire most about the man is his sense of supermarket synergy. Nothing goes to waste. Unbought bread becomes bread pudding. Overripe fruit gets put up for preserves and chutneys. Hot air from the bakery is channeled into his rooftop greenhouse, where he grows lettuces and fraise des bois. And the market itself keeps growing, with burgeoning departments for flowers, organic produce, and fish. The prepared-food selections make inspired lunches; the bread assortment is staggering. And, since it's too far off the beaten path for the ogling tourists who descend upon the food halls of SoHo and the Village, shopping here is a local, unharried experience. One quibble: Cheese fanatics might still feel compelled to brave the crowds downtown.

FRENCH BAKERY

PAYARD 1032 LEXINGTON AVENUE, AT 74TH STREET; 717-5252

Last year saw a boomlet in French bakeries, among them Payard Patisserie, the bakery-bistro powerhouse that has won over the Upper East Side with its bustling restaurant and casual café. An unusually accommodating Frenchman, François Payard wisely plays to a family crowd with spectacular confections, tasty panini on homemade bread, and velvety ice creams. He even caters to neighborhood whims, like a request for chocolate-covered matzo on Passover. We also love the exquisite croissants and brioche at Bonté (1316 Third Ave., at 75th; 535-2360). And for all-around atmosphere, Marquet Patisserie (15 East 12th St.; 229-9313) remains the best place to refuel with a top-notch espresso and a slice of St. Tropez.

NEIGHBORHOOD BISTRO

PATOIS 255 SMITH STREET, CARROLL GARDENS, BROOKLYN; 718-855-1535

Like comfort food, the bistro concept has become a cliché, a last resort for lazy restaurateurs aspiring to the something-for-everyone ideal. But when done correctly (Quatorze Bis, La Lunchonette, Park Bistro), it's a thing of hospitable beauty—*Cheers* with steak-frites. There needs to be a real synergy between neighborhood and bistro, and—judging by the nightly line of patient patrons—Brooklyn's Patois has it down pat. Chef-partner Alan Harding had cultivated a loyal following at the defunct Nosmo King, 9 Jones, and 131 Duane, but his Brooklyn clientele, long starved for a local restaurant of this caliber, may be the most devoted. With a flavorful, moderately priced menu (try the escargot in puff pastry or roasted chicken au poivre), surprisingly affordable wine list, and fashionably funky décor, Harding and his partners have answered their prayers. Now, if only they took reservations. . .

OYSTERS

BLUE WATER GRILL 31 UNION SQUARE WEST; 675-9500

These days, even the most well-heeled establishments are prone to serving up excessively briny, mushy bivalves. But not Blue Water Grill. Here, a team of experts makes careful checks of temperature, freshness, and quality. If an oyster is warmer than 45 degrees and older than 36 hours, it doesn't make it through the door. "It's also important to rotate several different varieties into one another, so that you don't wind up with bluepoints seven days a week," says Steve Hanson, the restaurant's proprietor. Even the slightly squeamish are catered to here—Blue Water Grill's menu includes a wine-list-like "oyster index" detailing different varieties and flavors, as well as four to six "beginner oysters"—for the uninitiated or just those, says Hanson, "who have been burned in the past, and now they're scared."

CURRIED GOAT

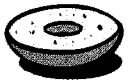
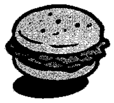
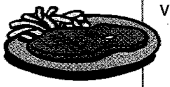
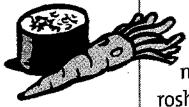
THE JERK CENTER 1296 EAST GUNHILL ROAD, THE BRONX; 718-547-1970

No restaurant in New York has less ambience than the Jerk Center. The front half of the premises is given over to an assortment of beepers and cell phones that are for sale. In the back, a television blares menacingly over the three tables. And the place isn't exactly centrally located. But by your second sub-

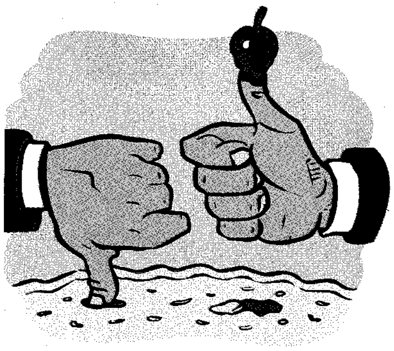
OUR CRITICS' PICKS

Basic Instincts

We thought it would be fine sport (not to mention a service to our readers) to have our four food critics pick their favorites for the elementary categories. They weren't pleased. They begged for months of research time and lush expense budgets, but we refused. We wanted their answers, and we wanted them now. Dutifully, they rose to the occasion. Gael Greene, who felt she hadn' eaten enough burgers recently to make a responsible choice fo that category, sampled four in a single day. Tough life, huh?

FOOD	GAEL GREENE	PETER KAMINSKY	ROBIN RAISFELD
PIZZA	Coal-oven pizza, effete little rounds, stuffed focaccia—I love them all. But my favorite is **Spartina's** (355 Greenwich St.) grilled fontina-ricotta-and-parmigiana pizza with truffle oil.	**House of Pizza & Calzone** (132 Union St., Brooklyn). Pre-designer pizza, thin crust, bright tomatoes.	**Patsy Grimaldi's** (19 Old Fulton St., Brooklyn) and **Nick's** (108-26 Ascan Ave., Forest Hills) tie for superlative thin-crust pies; **Sullivan Street Bakery** (73 Sullivan St.) for cheeseless Roman-style.
BAGEL 	I gave up bagels when they blew up as big as Mack-truck inner tubes. And I don't miss them now that I can find **Balthazar's** (80 Spring St.) multigrain loaf in my own neighborhood.	**Bagel Oasis** (183-12 Horace Harding Blvd., Fresh Meadows). Most places these days make the equivalent of a stale Parker House roll with a hole in it. This is the real deal—properly boiled and baked.	**Bagelry** (1324 Lexington Ave., at 88th St.). Hand-rolled and boiled, not the omnipresent mammoth doughballs. Honorable mention: uptown **Fairway** (2127 Broadway, at 75th St.).
COFFEE	**Caffè Dante** (79 MacDougal St.). I like my espresso with glissandi of Italian spoken in the background.	**Verandah Place Deli** (264 Clinton St., Brooklyn). Owner Christophe Barbier cooked for three-star chef Jacques Lameloise, and knows how to brew a cup of coffee, among other talents.	**Philip's Coffee Co.** (155 West 56th St.), topflight veteran of the coffee-bar craze of the nineties, has consistently excellent espresso and fresh-roasted coffee.
BURGER 	**Union Square Cafe's** (21 East 16th St.) expertly caramelized aristocrat on poppy-seed brioche. So smartly seasoned, ketchup or mustard seems a sacrilege. Love the tuna burger, too.	**Union Square Cafe** (21 East 16th St.). Filet-mignon burger with lots of fat. It fills the palate with meatiness.	Predictably, **Corner Bistro** (331 West 4th St.). Still satisfying, cheap, unpretentious, delicious.
STEAK-FRITES 	**Balthazar** (80 Spring St.). As if I needed another excuse to settle in at my favorite bistro.	**Chimichurri Grill** (606 Ninth Ave., at 43rd St.). The Argentines have forgotten more about meat than the French have ever known. Black-and-blue steak; honest, crispy fries.	Despite the scene, **Balthazar** (80 Spring St.). Excellent garlicky flavor with a dollop of butter that melts into the meat; crisp, yummy fries.
SALAD	Must I choose between the crab salad at **Jean Georges** (1 Central Park West), the seafood skyscraper at **Gotham Bar & Grill** (12 East 12th St.), and the chopped salad at **Mesa City** (1059 Third Ave.)?	**Milos** (125 West 55th St.). Lobster salad. Perfectly cooked, perfectly dressed, with robust, crisp greens.	Mark's Madison Avenue chopped salad at **Fred's** (10 East 61st St.). A well-dressed feast of tuna, crunchy asparagus, roasted peppers, green peas, beets, and lentils.
SUSHI 	After a dalliance at **BondSt's** (6 Bond St.) sushi counter, I'll sacrifice pristine shabui for the sassy high jinks and measured fusion of sushi hipster Hiroshi Nakahara.	**Nobu** (105 Hudson St.). The room is cool, the crowd is cool, the food is cool, and Nobu Matsuhisa is an artist.	Almost impossible to call. Maybe **Sushiden** (19 East 49th St.) for variety, **Kuruma Zushi** (7 East 47th St.) for geniality, **Tomoe** (172 Thompson St.) for portion size and artistry.
ICE CREAM	Caramel ice cream at **Gramercy Tavern** (42 East 20th St.). **Jean Georges's** (1 Central Park West) lemon. And for coffee ice cream, **Starbucks,** please.	**Ciao Bella** (262 Mott St.)—I'll take its sorbet over its ice cream, and wonder how anything fat-free can taste so delicious.	Chocolate sorbet at **La Maison du Chocolat** (25 East 73rd St.); cassis sorbet at **Ceci-Cela** (55 Spring St.); the gelato (especially hazelnut) at **Caffè Dante** (79 MacDougal St.).

Illustrations by Mark Matcho.



HAL RUBENSTEIN

Classic aluminum-pan-style: **Two Boots** (37 Ave. A), because of its matzo-brittle crust and bright and fiery tomato sauce. Knife-and-fork variety: **Fresco by Scotto's** (34 East 52nd St.) elegant rectangular version.

Moishe's (181 E. Houston St.). Crackingly solid and salty—and not available in any stupid flavors—these bagels will change your Sundays forever.

If coffee doesn't act like a booster, I'd rather have a Diet Coke. The powerful blend at **Aggie's** (146 W. Houston St.) sends her regulars to the moon and back every day.

A burger belongs at a counter, slightly greasy, infused with the musky taste of chuck, and full of luscious fat. Just like **Soup Burg's** (922 Madison Ave., at 73rd St.).

There are few restaurants more urbane and less smug about it than **Soho Steak** (90 Thompson St.). Jean Claude serves a lean, flavorful sirloin with a pile of crispy shoestrings.

Does anyone offer a plain old salad anymore, with finger-pickable greens, a buoyant vinaigrette, and nothing else? **Boughalem** (14 Bedford St.) does. It's like discovering spring.

Sushisay's (38 East 51st St.) fish is luxuriant. **Iso** (175 Second Ave.) has the spirit, energy, and skill to make sushi dining a fresh experience on every level.

Restaurants try too hard when they make their own. For unique flavors, go with **Ciao Bella** (262 Mott St.). For classics, **Häagen-Dazs's** strawberry and chocolate-chip are better than sex.

tly spiced bite, you'll forgive all. The goat ($6–$8) seems to melt in your mouth, dizzying you with complex flavors that hit all the right notes at once: sweet and savory, spicy but not overpowering, earthy and otherworldly. The Jerk Center also offers a first-rate jerk chicken, better-than-average oxtails, and an assortment of Rasta herbal drinks with such alluring names as Disturbance and Groundation. If you're true to the goat, there is no bad news at the Jerk Center. The trip to the Bronx is just gravy.

BRAZILIAN BARBECUE

CHURRASCARIA PLATAFORMA 316 WEST 49TH STREET; 245-0505

Brazilian-style barbecue is an all-you-can-eat prix fixe meatfest, about as unnouvelle as one could imagine. At the cavernous Churrascaria Plataforma, waiters rove the floor, each with a two-foot skewer or a big plate holding a monstrous, meaty offering. Flip the little indicator disk at the edge of your table to its green side, and they stop at your table and carve as you neatly pluck off the pieces with a pair of tongs. They don't stop coming (sirloin! skirt steak! chicken! sausage! ribs! mussels! salmon!) until you turn your indicator back to red. Riodizio (417 Lafayette Street; 529-1313) is handsomer and has better side dishes than Churrascaria Plataforma, but you go for a meal like this wanting meat, plain and simple, and Plataforma's is perfect.

TASTING MENU

LE BERNARDIN 155 WEST 51ST STREET; 489-1515

When you read them, tasting menus seem cute and manageable, a series of bite-size courses that allow you to sample the full range of a chef's talents. But when those elegantly arranged plates start coming at you, what choice do you have but to return them wiped clean? You forget pacing; you forget leaving room for desert. You forget your own limits. This is a particular hazard at Le Bernardin (six-course tasting dinner, $90), where chef Eric Ripert's creative fish concoctions—cumin-spiked tuna tartare; a moist, flash-cooked chunk of salmon with baby vegetables in black-truffle broth; pan-roasted skate in a light-green lentil–and–foie gras stew—build to a stunning crescendo with the crispy Chinese-spiced red snapper, bathed in an overwhelming reduction of aged port and jerez vinegar. It's a helluva lot more more food than you think, an incontestable truth not fully realized until you can barely touch the fig-and-almond-tart finale, with its crown of fennel ice cream. You can take those exquisite petits fours home in a doggie bag. Eventually, you might be hungry again.

ARTHUR AVENUE RESTAURANT

PASQUALE'S RIGOLETTO 2311 ARTHUR AVENUE, THE BRONX; 718-365-6644

Nearly every restaurant in the Arthur Avenue section of the Bronx has a legend attached to it. Amici's was where Joe Pesci used to work as a manager until the night De Niro and Scorsese showed up for dinner; Lee Iacocca used to dispatch his company jet from Detroit to pick up pizzas from Marios; and Dominick's is, of course, the place with no menus, prices, or private tables (you'd just better hope they like you). But Pasquale's Rigoletto, a relative newcomer in these parts (it's been open thirteen years), has raised the already high bar with its simple, exceedingly fresh food. Such as: the linguini with calamari, scallops, and shrimp in white-wine sauce, the veal chop with mushrooms, a little plate of pecorino and bruschetta brought out right when you sit down. And if all those $12 pasta joints in Manhattan have ruined the idea of tirami su for you, Pasquale's has got one that'll set you straight.

WHOLE GRILLED FISH

ELIAS CORNER 24-02 31ST STREET, ASTORIA; 718-932-1510

It expanded and lost intimacy, but at least you don't have to ogle anyone's bass while you stand on line for 45 minutes. The fish are still right there, on ice, as you walk in. How they get their squid to be so much more tender than anyone else's is one of life's enduring mysteries. Some days, the snapper ($16) is freshest; some days, the St. Peter's ($14). At Elias, that's all you care about: Your guy looks like it wants to go back in the water—even after being slowly grilled on the coals and getting drowned in clarified butter on the

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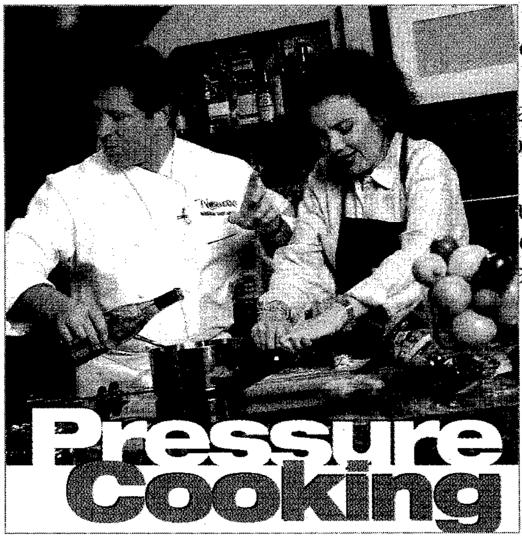
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Summer Entertaining Celebrity Dish Recipe Section

Issue Date	**June 27**
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TV Food Special

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Space Close	**June 2**

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plate. Some find it hard to eat something that's looking at them. We say you'll never want to see another fillet. For those who must remain on the island of Manhattan, the simply roast whole pompano at Da Silvano (260 Sixth Avenue; 982-2343) is fresh, meaty, and fragrant with herbs.

SMOKER-FRIENDLY RESTAURANT

CAFÉ LOUP 105 WEST 13TH STREET; 255-4746

Even hard-core smokers don't like eating in a haze of tobacco fumes. So while many pint-size French bistros give the nicotine-addicted free rein, smoking is a much more pleasant experience at Café Loup. The smokers' domain is a little nook of three small tables up front, positioned far enough away from the rest of the diners to ensure that the nasty habit doesn't impinge on anybody's breathing space.

PAELLA

BOLO 23 EAST 22ND STREET; 228-2200

For years, Bobby Flay has been bending our minds with glorious Technicolor preparations as vivid and explosive as Peter Max illustrations (witness, say, his roasted venison in cranberry-cinnamon sauce served with a pumpkin tamale at Mesa Grill). But the magic of his paella at Bolo is its balance and restraint. "People usually overcook paella," says the Manhattan-born chef. "It's all about timing." In his basic seafood-and-chicken rendition ($28), Flay mixes in a lemon-and-garlic aïoli, which gives the dish a surprising lightness. The silver-dollar-size scallops, plump shrimp, and wedges of chorizo give it depth. And Flay being Flay, there is color as well, a pleasing burst of saffron yellow rising like lava from the clay pot. "The idea," says Flay, "is to hit on all senses in one dish."

ORGANIC RESTAURANT

HERBAN KITCHEN 290 HUDSON STREET; 627-2257

For those bogged down by the toxicity of urban dwelling, Herban Kitchen offers an oasis of wellness without the loser ambience and dippy wait staff found at most natural restaurants. Set on a lost stretch of Hudson Street, the candlelit restaurant—why waste precious kilowatts?—offers entrées that are far tastier than they sound, like burgers of farm-raised, grass-fed beef and un-fried free-range chicken, as well as an extensive menu of organic wines and beers. The meals can be prepared to specification—no gluten? No problem!—pleasing both food-allergy sufferers and their less-health-conscious dinner partners.

CHEESECAKE

FINA PASTRIES 344 BOWERY, 253-0002

The sentimental pick here is Junior's, but what can you say about a place that boasts of selling 7,000 cheesecakes a week while daring to claim in its brochure that it doesn't "mass-produce" them? We prefer the pecan-crusted ricotta cheesecake at Fina, the Lower East Side bakery and café opened by Carolyn Giacalone. Based on her Sicilian mother's recipe, Giacalone's hybrid version is more refined and delicate than the classic New York style, yet creamier and less crumbly than the typical Italian ricotta. The cake derives its subtle citrusy tang from an orange confit that is simmered for several days. Giacalone scoffs at the notion of fat-free cheesecake (another dubious Junior's achievement). "Ricotta cheesecake isn't for someone who's afraid to eat," she says. The bravehearted can also find hers at at John's Pizzeria. Honorable mention: Brooklyn Diner USA's Cousin Esther's New York–style cheesecake.

CHOCOLATE FIX

THE COOKIE JAR AT MOOMBA 133 SEVENTH AVENUE SOUTH; 989-1414

If the Leonardo DiCaprio sighting at Moomba didn't send you reeling, the sugar high from the restaurant's Cookie Jar surely will. Three warm homemade chocolate-chip cookies are stacked on a plate with two Valrhona fudge brownies tucked between them. The entire mound swims in a pool of crème anglaise with what looks like a chocolate breadstick laid across the top. At the rate Moomba's socialite clientele is lapping them up, pastry chef Wendy Israel may just render the term *social X-ray* obsolete.

RICE DREAM | THE SEAFOOD-AND-CHICKEN PAELLA AT BOLO.

Photograph by Amy Freeth

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AFFORDABLE PSYCHOTHERAPY

NYU PSYCHOANALYTIC 263-6243

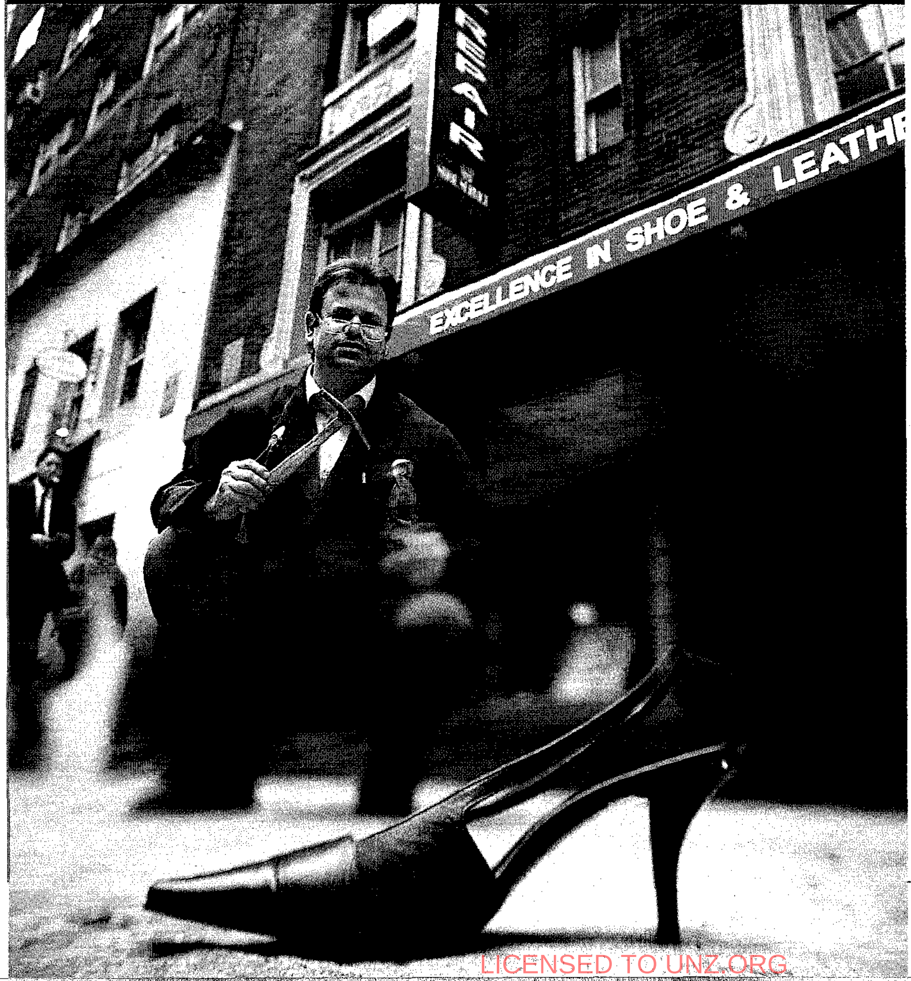
Dr. Sylvia Welsh, co-chair of the psychoanalytic-psychotherapy program at the NYU institute, once treated a patient for $1 per session. The institute is a postgraduate program in which licensed therapists gain advanced training in psychoanalysis or psychotherapy; its members are committed to making its services available to whoever needs them—no matter how far the scale of prices has to slide. Students in the program have already earned degrees in psychiatry or social work and meet with supervisors regularly to discuss the progress of all their cases. All sessions are conducted in private-practice settings, and fees are negotiated based on what the client can pay. Treatment plans are determined on a case-by-case basis. Patients who require medication can be referred to psychiatrists within the NYU program.

STILETTO REPAIR

SHOE SERVICE PLUS 15 WEST 55TH STREET; 262-4823

Call him an opportunist, or maybe he's just blessed with good timing, but Carlos Mesquita opened his specialty shoe-repair shop about seven months ago—just far enough into the stiletto trend to be there when all those spindly heels started to snap. So fashion victims, take heart: Wobble over to his shop with all the pieces in your purse, and you'll be amazed at the miraculous healings he can perform for $12.50. His clients include Prada, Ferragamo, Manolo, Barneys, and just about every fashion editor in the city. Free pickup and delivery are available throughout Manhattan.

THE HEELER | CARLOS MESQUITA CAN SALVAGE YOUR STILETTOS.



Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

TUXEDO RENTAL

AT HARRIS FORMALWEAR 11 EAST 44TH STREET; 682-6326

When you step into AT Harris, the oldest tuxedo shop in the U.S, it's okay if you don't know the difference between a cutaway and a stroller, as long as you agree that the best way to wear a tuxedo, the *only* correct way, is in the traditional, classic style. (Ask to see the paisley cummerbunds—we dare you.) Having outfitted ten sitting presidents—the Secret Service maintains an account there, too—AT Harris doesn't bother to keep up with the latest trends. All they want to know is, day or evening? Formal or semi-formal? The rest is between you and the tape measure. A simple tuxedo will run you $135; a tux and tails costs $165.

WINE AUCTION

MORRELL & COMPANY 535 MADISON AVENUE, AT 55TH STREET; 688-9370

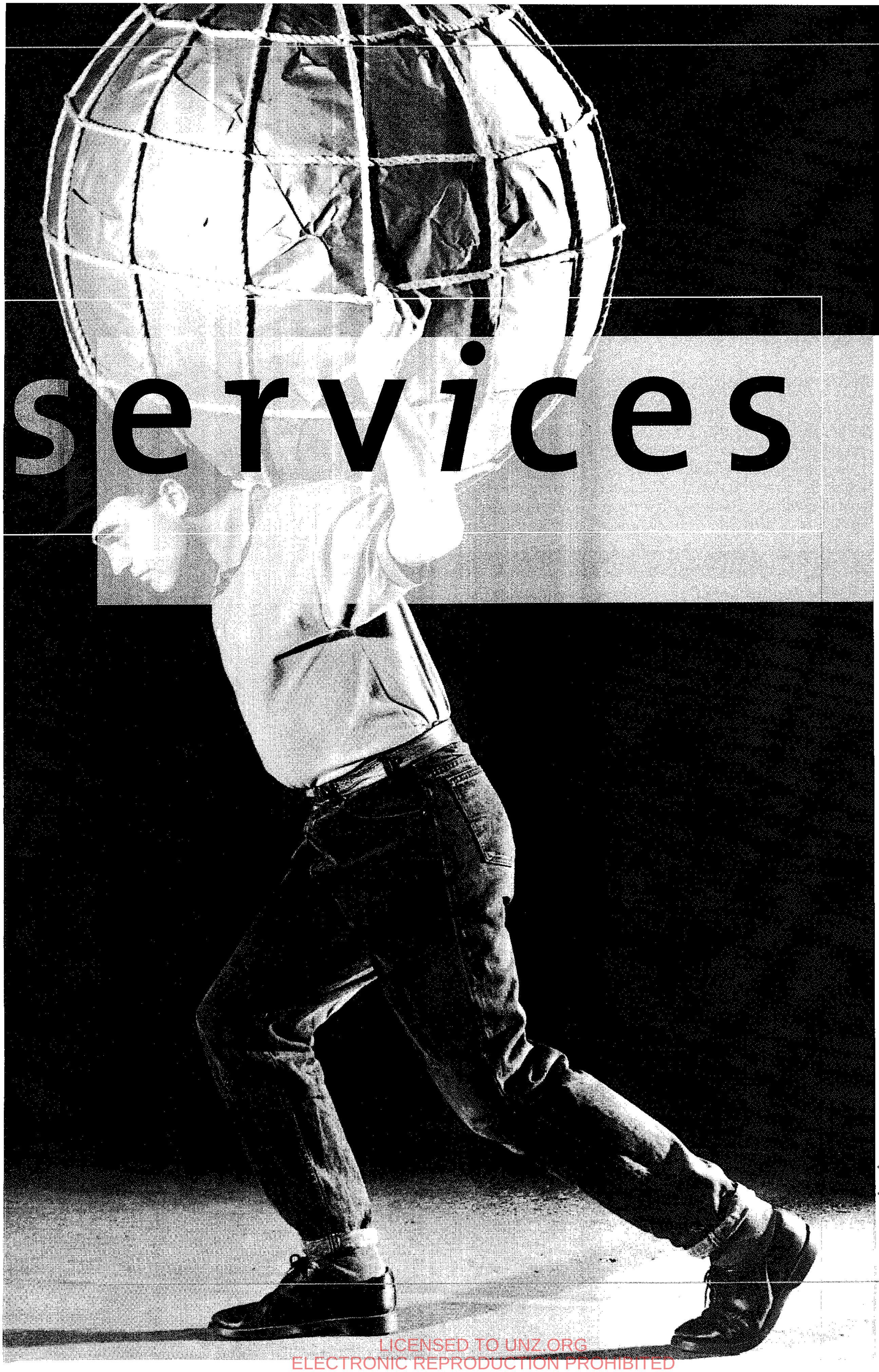
Now that you're past the $7.99 Chianti-special stage, maybe you should take a lesson from the city's finer restaurants, which know better than to pay retail. Places like La Côte Basque, Le Bernardin, Montrachet, and Sparks Steak House load up on hard-to-get vintages put on the docket by collectors and estates at auctions held by Morrell & Company. In January, a single magnum of Chateau Mouton-Rothschild 1945 sold for a record $15,525. But at the same auction, ten bottles of Ridge Vineyards Monte Bello 1984 (currently retailing at $195 a bottle) sold for only $920. Next auction: at the Union League Club on May 9.

TOOL RENTAL

MILLER'S TOOL RENTAL & SALES 485 CONEY ISLAND AVENUE, BROOKLYN; 718-856-7000

If you're planning a few home improvements—or if you merely crave the vibratory rush only a 65-pound jackhammer can provide—look no further than Miller's Tool Rental & Sales. Sure, the vast selection helps make Miller's the best power-tool dealer in

services



Stuart Redler/Hulton Getty/Tony Stone

town. But it's also the little things, like the special demo booth where would-be Bob Vilas can test-drive the merchandise. "Most places just give you a tool, here's how it works, good-bye, so long," says owner Jeff Miller. "Here, the customer gets more personal attention and safety consideration."

PHOTOGRAPHIC SERVICES

SPECTRA PHOTO/DIGITAL VARIOUS LOCATIONS

Most photographers fret from the moment they drop off their film for processing until the moment they pick up their prints. At Spectra Photo/Digital, frequented by well known lensmen and amateurs with airs, you needn't worry. The lab has a first-rate reputation, and you can get nifty Premier prints—four-by-six-inch color or black-and-white pictures ringed with a retro white border—the same day you drop off your film. The Premier print also gives you 10 percent more of the image than the industry standard. The process costs $15.63 for a roll of 36, $22.27 for doubles.

EXTERMINATORS

STERILE PERIL 154 FIFTH AVENUE, PARK SLOPE, BROOKLYN; 718-622-0053

Living at the top of the food chain, most people find it hard to suppress feelings of resentment and hostility when they discover a beaded line of mouse droppings in their sock drawer, or a rebel band of *cucarachas supremas* holding meetings in their kitchen. For twelve years now, Sterile Peril has been performing nontoxic vermin interventions that are entirely effective and affordable. By injecting mostly natural and noncarcinogenic poisons directly into nesting areas, coyly setting traps, and educating humans on preventive sanitation, the Brooklyn-based firm eliminates roaches, ants, fleas, moths, beetles, termites, and anything else that's bugging you without further blighting the environment.

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PRODUCE DELIVERY

URBAN ORGANIC 888-487-2260

Nostalgic old-timers and malcontent foodies are fond of complaining that supermarket fruits and vegetables just don't taste as good as they did in the old days. Urban Organic, the plucky Park Slope collective, will deliver to your door weekly reminders of the days before pesticides and rampant genetic manipulation dulled the peach, muted the yam, lamed the carrot, and decreased the nutritional value of the broccoli spear. After paying a reasonably low lifetime-membership fee of $25, customers select the size of their weekly parcel, which varies from pretty big ($27 per delivery) to way more than you can use unless you live with six culinarily adventurous vegetarians ($52). Delivered anywhere in the tri-state area.

HIV TEST

THE DAVID GEFFEN CENTER 119 WEST 24TH STREET; 367-1100

Getting an HIV test will never be as pleasant an experience as, say, oral surgery, but at Gay Men's Health Crisis's David Geffen Center, they've figured out how to alleviate at least some of the stress. The beautiful new building offers confidential testing, pre- and post-test counseling, complimentary services such as someone to talk to while you wait for the results, and workshops on staying negative or coping with being positive. Results come back in five days, and the cost is determined by a sliding scale with an average fee of $25. That said, if you just want a fast answer and have $95 to burn, Central Park Medical Associates (200 Central Park South, Suite 107; 246-0800) will give you the results in fifteen minutes. Anonymity here is airtight: It's all done on-site, and as the office manager says, "We must have 50 patients named Bill Clinton."

FLORIST

FLOWER SHOP BY DAVID BROWNE 399 BLEECKER STREET; 352-1224

From his tiny West Village storefront—filled with rare flora like aubergine calla

THIS BUD'S FOR YOU | DAVID BROWNE HAS A TALENT FOR EXOTIC ARRANGEMENTS.

lilies, Chinese peonies, ranunculuses, and taro leaves—David Browne cranks out some of the most intriguing and exotic arrangements in town. Among his more striking creations are miniature aquatic gardens or vivid arrangements of orange pencil tulips and maggio carrots. "We try to use the unusual as backup. We don't like filler," he says. After only a year in business, Browne has already developed a loyal following (including such flowery celebrities as Leonardo DiCaprio, Donatella Versace, and Lou Reed)—which isn't surprising, given the number of passersby who stop and stare at the otherworldly blooms he displays in his window. Arrangements start at $60 and go way up from there.

NUTRITIONIST

JOY BAUER, M.S., R.D. 123 WEST 79TH STREET, SUITE 206; 362-0909

Bauer's clients—be they ladies who (don't) lunch, Olympic athletes, cardiac-recovery patients, or finicky private-school kids—are all asked to keep a daily diary of the foods they eat, but she's not judgmental about what she reads. "I love to eat, so it's not my agenda to take food away from people," she says. A registered dietitian with an extensive background in the treatment of eating disorders and the author of *The Idiot's Guide to Eating Smart,* she has been conducting a private practice for nearly a decade, tailoring her approach to the individual needs of each client. So sometimes her contribution to a better eating plan is largely therapeutic (how did you develop your food anxieties?); at other times, it's simply practical (what should you eat while training for the marathon?); and often she works in tandem with physicians. Luckily for her patients, Bauer's methodology is all about moderation—but she *will* tell you to get your ass to the gym. Initial consultation is $150; subsequent 45-minute sessions are $100.

HUMIDOR BUILDER

NAT SHERMAN 500 FIFTH AVENUE, AT 42ND STREET; 764-5000

Should you find yourself—even after four bottles of Chateau Petrus, one Mercedes M-Class, and an Hèrmes alligator-skin purse for Mom—with part of your 1997 bonus left to spend, you might consider graduating to your very own in-house humidor. Nat Sherman can transform any one of your many extra closets or small rooms into a cedar-lined, climate-controlled home for those precious Partagas and Macanudos. The folks from Sherman's will design it to your specifications or consult with your architect at a preset hourly fee; you can either hand the plans over to your own team of carpenters or let Nat finish the job. Prices range from $3,500 to $100,000, depending on how big your habit is. And how keen you are to impress your dinner guests.

COMPUTER REPAIR

ABC COMPUTER SERVICES 375 FIFTH AVENUE, AT 36TH STREET, SECOND FLOOR; 725-3511

Those who don't know a bit about a byte (and those who do) would be wise to take their sputtering computer systems to ABC. The company's six technicians are knowledgeable, user-friendly experts who discuss your computer problems in understandable language. And at $55 an hour for in-store repairs and $80 for on-site work, the prices are among the lowest in the city. ABC accepts PCs, Macs, printers, and scanners; online and over-the-phone assistance is also offered. Honorable mention: MacVision Computers (239 East 5th Street, soon moving to Times Square; 586-8445), a competitively priced store that accepts all brands but specializes in Mac repair.

BAG REPAIR

MODERN LEATHERGOODS 2 WEST 32ND STREET; 947-7770

Your neighborhood shoe-repair shop can restitch a battered briefcase, but when you need to mend your Gucci attaché or your grandma's alligator purse, you'd better go straight to the experts. Modern's perfectionist staff can tackle a daunting list of problems. And since Modern is the authorized repair service for many of the swankest names, the company has drawers full of signature hardware, zippers,

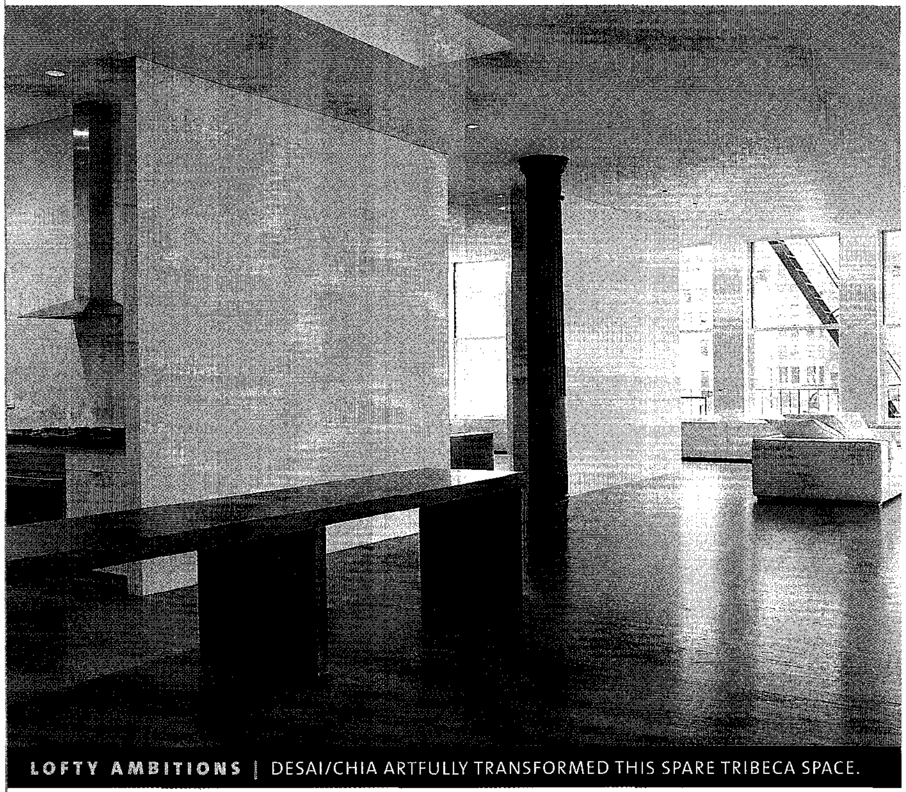
hotograph by Kenneth Chen.

handles, and fabric to ensure a perfect match. Free delivery in Manhattan.

LOFT CONVERSION

DESAI/CHIA STUDIO 222 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, AT 18TH STREET, SUITE 6-C; 228-1222

Say you happen to own several thousand square feet of raw loft space in downtown Manhattan and want to transform it into something truly sublime. Something shelter-magazine editors will get into a catfight over. You could hire a superstar architect, of course. But unless you happen to be a celebrity, the job will ultimately be executed by a bunch of assistants while your high-priced talent jets off to Europe to supervise the construction of a billion-dollar museum. Instead, consider hiring a small firm like Desai/Chia Studio that offers personalized service and reasonable rates. This young husband-and-wife team, both alumni of MIT's prestigious master's program, have quickly gained a reputation as loft specialists. Influences are as diverse as Japanese rock gardens, light sculpture by James Turrell, and Donald Judd furniture. Hire them before they start designing museums.



LOFTY AMBITIONS | DESAI/CHIA ARTFULLY TRANSFORMED THIS SPARE TRIBECA SPACE.

MAID SERVICE

WHITE GLOVE ELITE 594-2830

A good maid should be like a good doctor: someone who can look at a disastrous situation and say, with a reassuring smile, "I've seen worse." The staff at White Glove Elite has not only seen it all but cleaned it all up afterward. Half the staff are thespians trying to earn money between acting jobs; maybe they're grateful not to be waiting tables, but they seem to take an anal-retentive pleasure in their work. And they have strong preferences about how to do it. "We will use Pledge if you really want us to," says Jim Ireland, the owner. "But we'd really rather not." Four hours is the minimum visit, at $15 an hour; you supply the cleaning products.

CASHMERE STORAGE

MADAME PAULETTE DRY CLEANERS 1255 SECOND AVENUE, AT 65TH STREET; 838-6827

You've poured your last paycheck into that TSE cardigan, so why let it rot in the back of your closet all summer with a spot of red wine on the sleeve? Madame Paulette Dry Cleaners will restore your prized possession to its former cocktail-party luster and guard it until tank-top weather subsides. For a base price of $13, your sweater is carefully inspected and stains are eradicated one by one. After a custom cleaning according to color and fabric, and a brief grooming and depilling session, the garment is placed in a special climate-controlled environment. When you're ready to think about gray flannel and fall leaves again, your beloved is set to be delivered anywhere in Manhattan—or FedExed around the world.

AUTO-GLASS REPAIR

N.N. AUTO GLASS 1791 WEBSTER AVENUE, THE BRONX; 718-299-5606

If you keep a car in New York, it's bound to happen eventually: Someone will disregard your unambiguous NO RADIO sign, overlook your unlocked door en route to your glove compartment, or spy a parcel in your backseat and decide to help himself. Visit those shameless auto-glass repair shops or dealerships in the far-west Fifties, though, and you're likely to get robbed all over again. If your busted car is drivable at all, head for the Bronx, home of the reasonably priced mechanic. Just off the Cross Bronx Expressway, N.N. Auto Glass will do the job right for about half the price of any Manhattan shop: $135 for most windshields, $75 for most side windows.

MOVING COMPANY

BROWNSTONE BROTHERS MOVING & STORAGE 426 EAST 91ST STREET; 289-1511

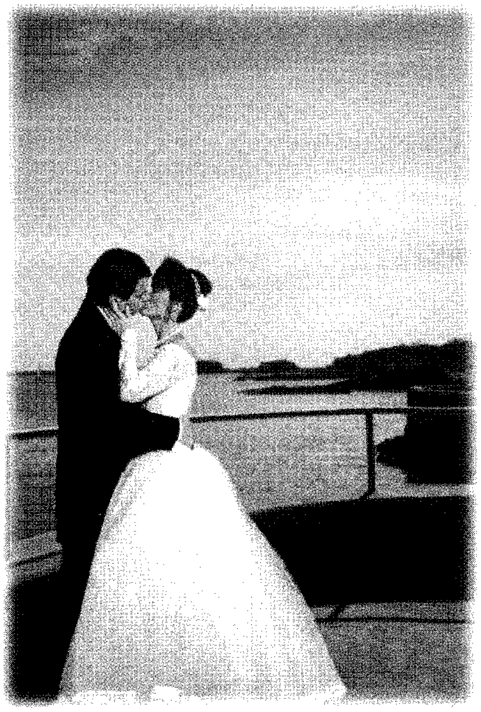
Brownstone Brothers touts itself as "the East Side's most recommended mover," but one plug in particular stands out. In an impromptu poll at the realty offices of the elite Corcoran Group, Brownstone Brothers was the landslide winner. General manager Paul Peterson says Brownstone's greatest asset is that its movers "are so nice. They absorb anxiety, and people are tremendously freaked out on moves. We've had crazy divorces where the husband and wife have been fighting in the street." Most of the movers have been with the company for eight to ten years, and they have resettled everyone from Allen Ginsberg to Oliver Sacks. Rates start at $75 an hour for two men and go up to $131 an hour for five men.

Photograph by Joshua McHug

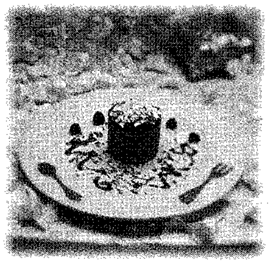
A Very Special Place...
Where All Your Dreams Come True

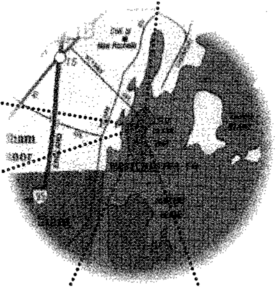
Introducing the elegant new Glen Island Harbour Club, a very special place dedicated to making all your wedding dreams come true. Once the location of Glen Island Casino, known as the "swing palace" where Glenn Miller and Tommy Dorsey captivated the hearts of America, now completely transformed into the most spectacular location in the New York area.

Imagine making a grand entrance across a drawbridge and through lush park grounds to an exclusive island setting with spectacular water views. The lobby welcomes you with a roaring fireplace, traditional library and elegant brass-railed staircase. Gently breaking waves and a breathtaking sunset surround the storybook chapel. The party begins when you join your guests in the magnificent ballroom for a first-class meal prepared especially for you.



Call now to set up an appointment to see a very special place. The Glen Island Harbour Club ... where all your dreams come true. 914-636-6500




10 min. from Connecticut
4 min. from I-95 or Hutchinson Parkway
15 min. from Manhattan
10 min. from Whitestone Bridge
10 min. from Throgs Neck Bridge

Glen Island
◆ Harbour Club ◆

Glen Island Park, New Rochelle, NY 914-636-6500

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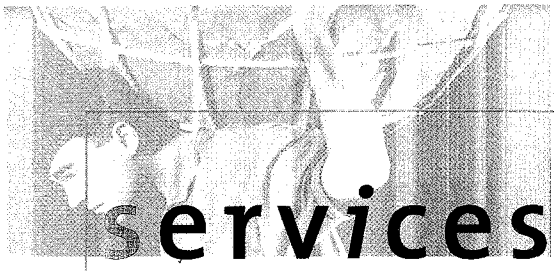


services

MOTORCYCLE MECHANIC

TRIBOROUGH MOTORCYCLES 366 MCGUINNESS BOULEVARD, WILLIAMSBURG, BROOKLYN; 718-349-2190

Just about the worst thing you can do to a motorcycle is ride it in New York City. And getting it fixed here's no picnic, either. You'll survive if—and only if—you find a shop that's right for your bike, that specializes in repairs rather than sales, and that has a mechanic you feel you can trust and work with. Mark Grilli, at Triborough, caters to the everyday commuter, nursing worn-out Hondas and Kawasakis back to perfect health at extremely reasonable rates.

KENNEL

PAWS INN 189 NINTH AVENUE, AT 21ST STREET; 645-PAWS

Just imagine the parties your dog might throw while you're in Bermuda. Save that pristine white couch from certain besmirchment and check the pooch into the Paws Inn, where dogs are the masters of all they see (that would be a Chelsea brownstone with a roof deck the size of most playgrounds). Never mind how to get him over there—for a fee, they'll send a limo, with a TV that plays *101 Dalmatians.* Your replacement will let your finicky canine sleep as long as he wants to, groom him according to your specifications, and not alter his diet a smidgen. We promise he'll make new friends, but they might not be as ethnically diverse as you'd like: Dogs are separated into cliques by size and disposition. Rates: over fifteen pounds, $42 a day; under fifteen, $38 a day.

WINDOW CLEANERS

FLATIRON SERVICES 230 EAST 93RD STREET; 876-1000

You're a good person. You deserve clean windows. The squeegees-to-society can be acquired at Flatiron Services, window washers since 1893 for Jackie O., the Rockefellers, and other people who can justifiably call their apartments "residences." A single window runs a meager $6 to $9, but "many apartments we take care of have over a hundred," says proprietor Louis Marchesi. "We've even billed over $1,000 in one visit." You do the math.

STOCK-MARKET WEBSITE

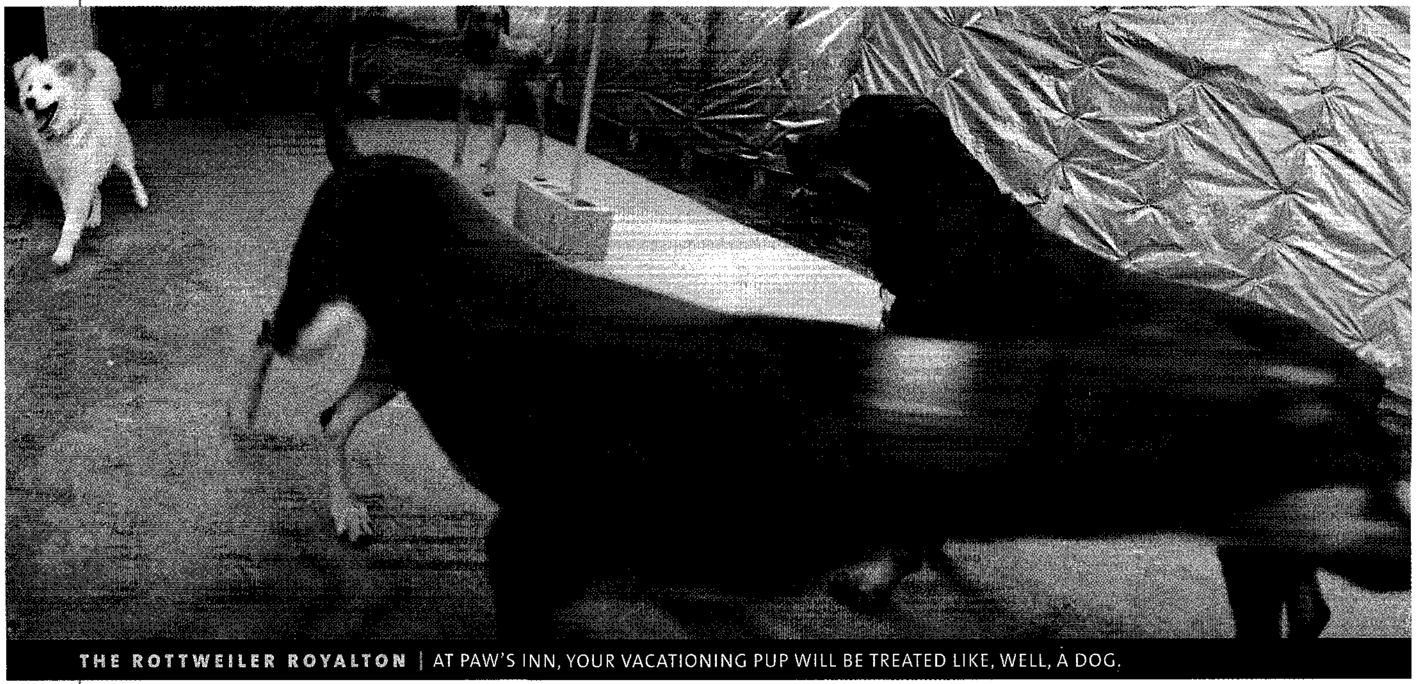
SILICONINVESTOR.COM

New York City may be home to some of the most esteemed stock pickers in the world (should we add boorish and stuck-up?), but home traders find better, and cheaper, tips on the Web, particularly at the gabfest site siliconinvestor.com. For $125, you get a lifetime membership that includes access to earnings calendars, a good search engine, and savvy editorials. But the real action takes place on the message boards. Check out the thread by Doug R., a Delaware man who works a night shift and does most of his analysis and posting after 2 A.M. He's invented/ discovered a series of patterns that have beaten the averages to a whimper (www.exchange 2000.com/~wsapi/investor/Subject-15770). It's SI's most visited thread, but Doug'll always get back to you, particularly if you bring him a winner.

CHEAP CAR RENTAL

AAMCAR 506 WEST 181ST STREET, 927-7000; AND 315 WEST 96TH STREET, 222-8500

Because it can cost more to rent a car in New York than in just about any other place in the world, day-trippers often cross the George Washington Bridge in search of rental relief. But you might as well save yourself the schlep: at AAMCAR, a stylin' set of wheels rents for the unheard-of price of $42.95 for the first day, including insurance and 100 free miles. If you're planning on keeping the car past midnight, the price goes up to $49.95, with unlimited mileage within the tri-state area. Three-day weekend rates vary from $129.95 to $189.95. Most of the cars are '97s or '98s, and models such as Geos, Mirages, and Ford Tauruses abound; minivans or four-wheel-drives are available for a bit more.



THE ROTTWEILER ROYALTON | AT PAW'S INN, YOUR VACATIONING PUP WILL BE TREATED LIKE, WELL, A DOG.

Photograph by Evan Kafka

No matter where you had heart surgery, doctors from NYU Medical Center helped save your life.

1933

NYU PHYSICIAN DEVELOPS THE FIRST DRUG TO FIGHT HEART ATTACKS.
Streptokinase, developed by NYU doctor William S. Tillet, has helped thousands of patients recover from sudden heart attacks.

1967

NYU DEVELOPS INTERNAL MAMMARY BYPASS.
NYU Chief of Surgery Dr. Frank C. Spencer is the first to experimentally propose the use of the internal mammary artery in bypass surgery in 1967, with NYU's Dr. George Green performing the first clinical operation in 1969. The internal mammary artery bypass has since become the "gold standard" of bypass surgery worldwide.

1979

REVOLUTIONARY TECHNIQUE FOR MITRAL VALVE REPAIR AVOIDS THE NEED FOR VALVE REPLACEMENT IN MANY PATIENTS.
NYU Cardiothoracic surgeons bring a new mitral heart valve repair technique to the U.S. Today, virtually all valve repairs are performed using minimally invasive techniques which provide faster recovery and better cosmetic results. With one of the largest worldwide experiences in valve repair, NYU continues to be a national leader in heart valve surgery.

1996

NYU SURGEONS PIONEER MINIMALLY INVASIVE CARDIAC SURGERY.
Doctors Stephen Colvin, Aubrey Galloway, Eugene Grossi and Greg Ribakove develop a revolutionary technique for minimally invasive heart surgery, performing the first port-access triple bypass. This technique allows heart surgery to be performed through small "ports," eliminating the need to cut the breastbone. This reduces pain and shortens recovery time. NYU has more experience with this new method than any other hospital in the world.

2018

NYU MEDICAL CENTER RESEARCH FOCUSES ON ENDING CORONARY ARTERY DISEASE.
NYU scientists are already working to understand genetic manipulation to help us maintain the health of our arteries. It's just another example of how NYU Medical Center is guided by a simple philosophy: Putting the patient first. For the past 155 years, this has been the core principle behind our every contribution – in research, education and patient care. And it's the one thing that we will never change.

Putting patients first for over 155 years.

NYU Medical Center
NYU SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

For an NYU physician, call 1-888-7-NYU-MED
550 First Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016
www.med.nyu.edu

HOW TO CUT THROUGH RED TAPE

Over Easy

Ideally, that squeegee guy is no longer bothering you. Ditto those pesky muggers. But just because the city has actually alleviated some hassles of New York life doesn't mean the bureaucratic monster has been tamed. Some pointers to help make it work for you:

PASSPORT RENEWAL/APPLICATION

By 6 a.m., the line outside the New York Emergency Passport Acceptance office on Fifth Avenue at 49th Street is already snaking around the block—and forget about even showing up if you don't have an appointment. The sane alternative is only a few blocks away, at the **Franklin D. Roosevelt Post Office,** on Third Avenue at 54th street (330-5660). There, at one discreetly marked window, is a welcoming clerk who accepts passport applications and renewals and will mail you your passport within days. "People don't seem to realize it, but we've been here for years," marvels one FDR worker. Now all you have to worry about is that photo.

MARRIAGE LICENSES

Approaching Manhattan's central marriage-license bureau on Centre Street is enough to make some couples consider calling the whole thing off. "There were about a thousand immigrants, desperate for marriage documents," gripes one woman, disillusioned after a recent attempt. A quick walk across the Brooklyn Bridge would have helped. At the **Brooklyn branch of the New York State License Bureau,** located at 210 Joralemon Street, things are calmer and quicker. Says one Brooklyn license processor, "People seem to think they have to go to Manhattan for official documents. They're wrong."

RENT DISPUTE

Sure, there are still people out there living in three-bedroom apartments and paying $400 in rent. But you probably aren't one of them. Happily, a few hours spent at the lower-Manhattan office of the **Department of Housing and Community Renewal,** at 25 Beaver Street (480-6231), can work wonders. After you've filed a few forms, the DHCR will look at your apartment's rental history: If your landlord has illegally hiked your rent, he may have to pay you retroactively and face triple damages for overcharging (fines are decided on a case-by-case basis.) The bad news: Despite improvements, the DHCR backlog means some cases can drag on for years. The good news: In certain situations, your rent may be frozen until the dispute is resolved, and the threat of DHCR action alone is enough to motivate some landlords to do the right thing.

URBAN DECAY

Actually, putting a call in to Al D'Amato is not the best way to deal with that cavernous pothole eating up your street or that crumbling sidewalk. In fact, the **Department of Transportation** has a hotline, 212-CALL-DOT/718-CALL-DOT, for that very purpose. "If you notice that your street is in disrepair, or if you think a stoplight should be installed somewhere, give us a call," says a DOT spokesman. "That's why we're here." Never mind those parking tickets.

DRIVER'S-LICENSE RENEWAL

One glance at the Department of Motor Vehicles's Worth Street main office (five-hour lines, surly personnel) could almost make you relish a road test. The best alternative is the aptly named **DMV X-press** office, at 300 West 34th Street (645-5550). "We have more time to deal with people," explains one X-press staffer. That's partly because the X-press office handles only license renewals, not first-timers. "I didn't have a whole bunch of hassled teenagers breathing down my neck," says one visitor. No, you can save that for the subway ride home.

PAYING A PARKING TICKET

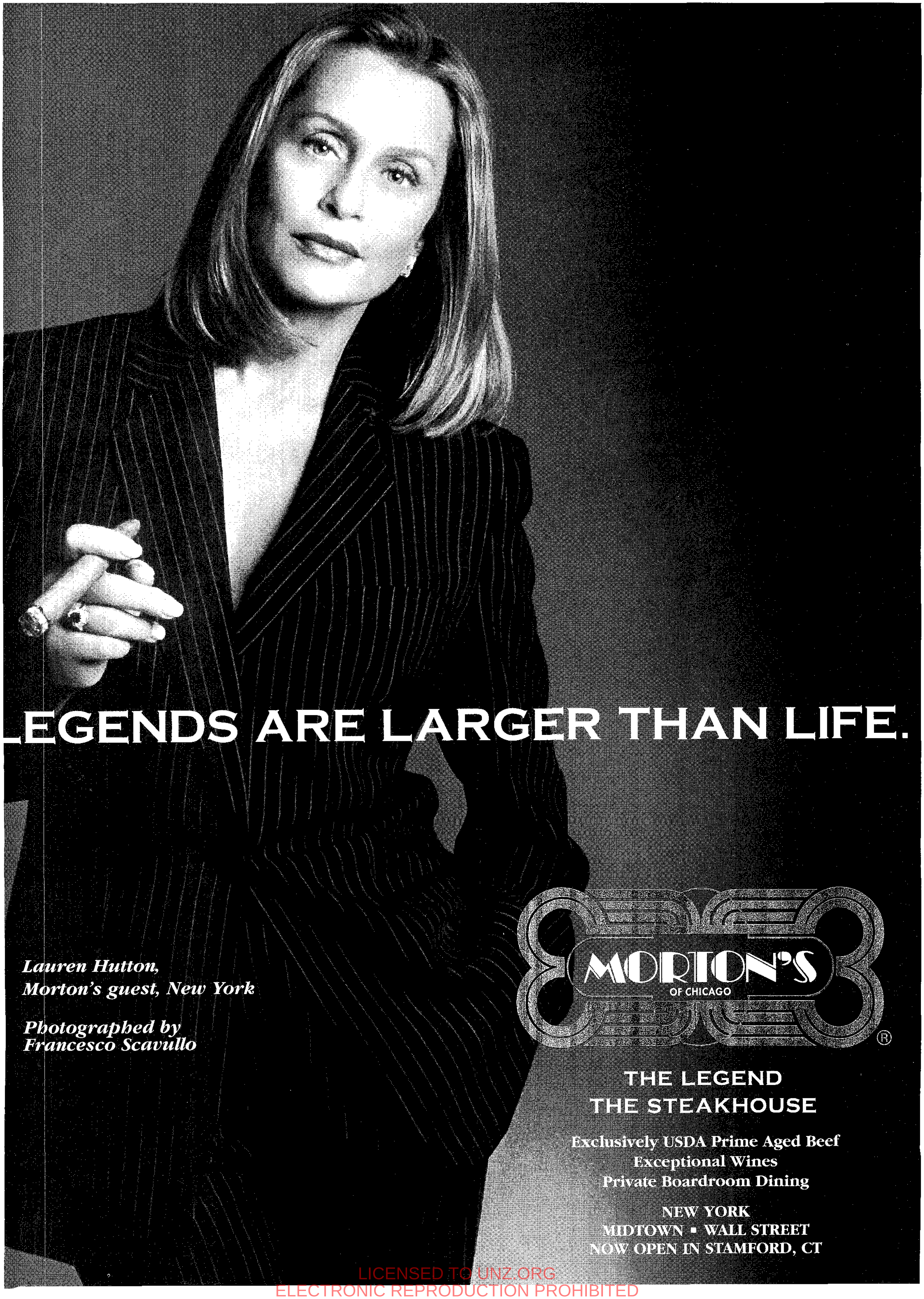
The Parking Violations Bureau recently, and quietly, announced that a few select establishments, such as check-cashing joints, could now accept parking-ticket payments. Now there's even less reason to let them pile up in your glove compartment. Among them: **Uribea Check Cashing,** 143 West 72nd Street; **5 East Check Cashing,** 5 East 41st Street; and **Beil Check Cashing,** 554 West 181st Street.

FIGHTING CITY HALL

You wake up one morning, and—surprise!—your street is under construction. If you have a modem, you need not simmer in frustration any longer. The city's little-used and largely unknown Website, **www.ci.nyc.ny.us,** provides frequently updated information on all manner of Gotham events, from city planning to landmark concerns to traffic issues. The site also features a complete directory of government agencies, so you know whom to draft that angry letter to.

KATE COYNE

Illustration by Mark Matcho.


LEGENDS ARE LARGER THAN LIFE.
MORTON'S
OF CHICAGO
®

Lauren Hutton,
Morton's guest, New York

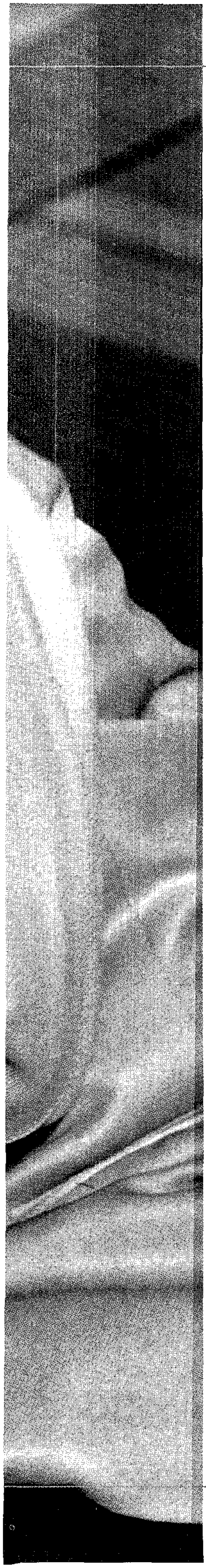
Photographed by
Francesco Scavullo

THE LEGEND
THE STEAKHOUSE

Exclusively USDA Prime Aged Beef
Exceptional Wines
Private Boardroom Dining

NEW YORK
MIDTOWN ▪ WALL STREET
NOW OPEN IN STAMFORD, CT

nightlife
& ENTERTAINMENT


Jack Garber/FPG

SIP THE PERFECT COCKTAIL, ATTEND A ROCKIN' ART OPENING, SHAKE IT AT A JAMAICAN DANCE HALL, OR JUST DO IT IN THE ROAD.

GALLERY-OPENING PARTY

GREENE NAFTALI GALLERY 526 WEST 26TH STREET; 463-7770

Frequented by young denizens of the art world and a sizable crowd of crashers, the Greene Naftali Gallery, in the new art ghetto of West Chelsea, hosts sprawling openings that practically scream, "Ten kegs! Five bands!" There's plenty of trade talk for the artists, but it's the writers, musicians, and other spectators in attendance who transform an obligatory professional ritual into a loud, smoky mixer. Last summer, the gallery hosted a John Cage–cum–riot grrl performance by the Sheer Frost Orchestra—seventeen women performing an impromptu rock opera on electric guitars played with nail-polish bottles. It's this combination of high and low that packs 'em in, although the free drinks don't hurt.

NEW CLUB

SHINE 285 WEST BROADWAY; 941-0900

It's hard to say which night at Shine was better: when Tom Comet balanced a running lawn mower on his chin, when Anna Jack swung several dozen hula hoops simultaneously, or when Samoa had a comic, violent love affair with a baby doll onstage. "We wanted to bring entertainment back to nightlife," says co-owner Marcus Linial. "We didn't want to make it just another club where people sit around and pose and talk about where they're going next." No chance of that, with acts like the Sugar Hill Gang and Alana Davis on the lineup, and all for a $5 entrance fee ($10 on the weekends). Open only since December, Shine's already attracting crowds, and the usual celebrity suspects, like John-John, Wesley Snipes, megacool old-timers like Jimmy Page and Robert Plant, and Leo, Leo, Leo! Shine on with that freak show.

DOUBLE FEATURE

MOVIE PALACE 93 BOWERY; 925-1079

Once upon a time, in the heyday of double features, Chinatown was full of theaters showing blockbusters direct from the Crown colony. Today they're all gone, save one: the aging Movie Palace, the only venue that continues playing double bills of first-run Chinese action flicks and comedies (all subtitled), for only $6. The place is a bit mildewy, but it's authentic: prawns, squid, and soy milk are available in addition to popcorn at the concession stand. As if that weren't reason enough to drop the remote and head to the Bowery, this is your only shot at seeing these films, unless they secure a sweet American distribution deal.

ON LIME | A CAIPIRINHA AT CIEL ROUGE.

CAIPIRINHA

CIEL ROUGE 176 SEVENTH AVENUE, NEAR 20TH STREET; 929-5542

At Ciel Rouge, the caipirinhas are a knockout for everyone concerned. Unlike the many bars that make these drinks by the pitcherful, Ciel Rouge mixes each one by hand using cachaça (a Brazilian distilled-sugarcane liquor), brown sugar, and minced limes. If you're still standing after three rounds, you should think about retreating to your home for safety as well as from consideration of others—quick, before the accordion player starts another set. Luckily for the caipirinha neophyte, this bordellolike room serves other cocktail curios with which one might cut the cachaça. *Bom gosto e saúde!*

Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

BOUNCERS

DANNY AND MIKE SANDOMENICO

Danny Bronx and Big Mike don't do the list, so don't bother telling them you're on it. If there's a fight, they don't care who started it, so don't try to get them involved. And they've seen just about all the heat a clubgoer might pack, so don't even think about impressing them with your weaponry. When the two Sandomenico brothers are working the door at Extremes, P.C.'s, the Riddler's Saloon, or any of the rest of the wildest clubs in the Bronx and Manhattan, all they care about is keeping trouble out. With 550 pounds and 24 years' experience between them, that's rarely a problem. Tough though they are, they're not thugs: "We don't want to be famous like some of those other bouncers," says Danny. "We just keep everything cool." His brother agrees. "I want to make sure everybody has a great time," Mike says, grinning. "Even if I have to drag them out by their feet."

ISLAND SONG | JAMAICAN DANCE HALL AT LIGUANE INTERNATIONAL.

GAMBLING CRUISE

MANHATTAN CRUISES 888-611-CRUISE

It's not just the excitement of boarding a cruise ship bound for international waters that makes a night on the *SuperStar Capricorn* such surreal fun. It's watching natives of Staten Island and SoHo bond around $5 blackjack tables. It's lining up for a buffet dinner—complete with ice sculptures and roast beef—and being serenaded by a Taiwanese trio crooning "Country Roads." It's dancing at a Eurodisco when you're really only three miles offshore—and then walking next door to the karaoke bar and finding a lone woman singing a Cantonese love song. In warm weather, there's also swimming and outdoor dining. With all that, who cares how Lady Luck treats you at the tables? ($99 weekdays, $199 weekends.)

VIDEO ARCADE

CHINATOWN FAIR ARCADE
14 MOTT STREET; NO PHONE

Playing a quick game of Space Invaders or Tempest in a noisy, grungy arcade has the same effect on anyone under 35 that madeleines had on Proust (whoever he is). Waste a few quarters in this darkened den of digital iniquity and the nostalgia will so overwhelm you that you'll find yourself longing for Wacky Packs and banana-seat bikes. The strong assortment of vintage games includes the entire family Pac-Man (original, Ms., Super, and Baby), Mr. Do!, Galaga, and Centipede—though the place is by no means short on newer shoot-'em-up games such as Virtua Street Fighter 3 and House of the Undead. Along the back wall are pinball machines and the dusty Thinkin' Booth, former home to the renowned tic-tac-toe-playing chicken, the attraction that first made this odd spot famous. He now resides safely at the owner's home, never to play again.

JAMAICAN DANCE HALL

LIGUANE INTERNATIONAL RESTAURANT & CATERING 220-30 JAMAICA AVENUE, QUEENS; 718-776-0747

This crowded nightclub—appropriately situated in Jamaica, Queens—is the new king of Jamaican dance-hall music, having inherited the crown after attempts to quell chronic violence left Q Club International as much fun as Checkpoint Charlie. The real draw is the live music, such as Spragga Benz and Beenie Man, and the master D.J.'s Afrique Soundstation and Black Terror. "The place moves like a wave," Ian, producer of the radio show "Caribbean Blend," says of the hands-in-the-air roughhouse dancing that takes place in a space bathed in rose light and surrounded by mirrors. At Monday's Gal Farm Party and at Cool Out Sunday, the line outside stretches from the bouncers who block the entrance to the bodegas around the corner. Admission is $15 to $20.

UNLIKELY ROCK VENUE

THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE ANCHORAGE
CADMAN PLAZA WEST, BETWEEN HICKS AND OLD FRONT STREETS; 206-6674

Vaulted ceilings and gigantic art installations may not the typical rock club make, but during the summer months, this multipurpose space really cranks it up. Formed by the structure that affixes the Brooklyn Bridge's cables to terra firma, its seven sprawling chambers are the ideal backdrop for expansive, trance-inducing sounds. Last year, local heroes Sonic Youth played, as did acts of lesser stature (but equally spacious sound) like Main, Scanner, and turntable deconstructionist D.J. Spooky. This summer, intrepid rockers can look forward to shows by John Zorn, Mike Patton, and hip-hoppers of various stripes, plus a tribute to Detroit techno music. And no matter who plays, the setting's always worth the trip.

COMEDY TROUPE

THE UPRIGHT CITIZENS BRIGADE
874-7900, EXTENSION 1348

Billing itself as "an underground intelligence agency out to undermine au-

Photograph by Andre Lambertson/Sab

thority through the proliferation of chaos," the Upright Citizens Brigade weaves inspired characters and preposterous scenarios through the loose framework of its surveillance efforts. In response, its fanatic audience tends to gush over the group's "unbelievably alert" improv, "overwhelming generosity of spirit," and habit of "laughing until they're ill." Matt Besser, Amy Poehler, Ian Roberts, and Matt Walsh will probably be household names soon; after winning an award at the U.S. Comedy Arts Festival, the foursome snagged their own Comedy Central show, scheduled to debut August 12 right after *South Park*. In the meantime, you can catch them at Solo Arts Group (36 West 17th Street; 463-8732) on Sunday and Thursday nights at eight.

GROWN-UP GAY PARTY

BEIGE AT B BAR & GRILL 40 EAST 4TH STREET; 475-2220

The full-throttle fabulosity of Beige, the weekly post-gay Tuesday-night bacchanal at Bowery Bar, doesn't get under way until midnight. With its loungey décor and eclectic music (from Viennese waltzes to London illbient), it's a refreshing respite from the steroid-soaked salons of Chelsea and the self-consciously low-*Rent* gay bars of the East Village. The hosts, Erich Conrad and Edwige, call it a "grown-up glamour oasis." Sort of like an old-style gentlemen's club, except that the "gentlemen" are high-end hairstylists, fashion publicists, aspiring models, or FIT seniors. Not to mention Francesco Clemente, Ross Bleckner, Randolph Duke, Rupert Everett—even Sophia Loren—and inevitably Michael Musto, slouched in a corner taking notes. A new treat this season: go-go boys modeling clothing created especially for Beige by anonymous "couturiers."

BACKDROP

PALIO 151 WEST 51ST STREET; 245-4850

Follow Time Inc. power brokers and brainstorming TV executives through the revolving door into the soothing quiet—and vibrant décor—of Palio, the well-established bar and restaurant that could put many galleries to shame. Sandro Chia's stunning mural of the running of the bulls, rendered in spectacular oranges and reds, covers the walls, mesmerizing enough to overwhelm any thoughts of the petty hassles you left behind in your office. For a more private tête-à-tête, grab one of the round tables on the side as the Spanish music or opera arias float overhead. The house special, a frozen Sunset, is also a thing of beauty, though its ingredients remain a tightly held secret. "You may not feel the rum now," warns the stately bartender, "but you'll feel it as you walk across 49th Street."

DANCE-MUSIC INDUSTRY PARTY

SUBLIMINAL AT ACCESS 17 WEST 19TH STREET; 581-2408

Whether it's dance music or just networking that you really love, Subliminal is the only party you need to know about (though you'll go to all the others, too; you just can't help yourself). Named after the dance label, it's hosted on the first Tuesday of every month by label manager Debra Eriksen, along with Rob Fernandez and Erick Morillo. Which means that in addition to having great music—live performances by up-and-coming artists such as Kimara Lovelace and Constipated Monkeys, and mixed tunes by well-known club jocks like David Morales, D.J. Doc Martin, Lord G., or D.J. Sneak—the party attracts a considerable number of industry movers and shakers. Shake your thang in the right direction and you just might end up with a recording contract, or at least a drink ticket.

OPEN-AIR MOVIE SCREENINGS

OCULARIS 70 NORTH SIXTH STREET, BROOKLYN; 718-388-8713

It began as last summer's best-kept secret: Sunday-night movies on top of an old mayonnaise factory in Williamsburg. New short flicks by neighborhood filmmakers were paired with a feature-length movie. "It was very much an underground venture," says Ocularis founder Donal O'Ceilleachair. But the view (of the Brooklyn Bridge and the Manhattan skyline) was better than the parking lot at Le Madri's, and the crowd was way hipper than Bryant Park's. By Labor Day, the screening center's On the Roof + Under the Stars series was turning people away—despite the fact that finding a seat meant navigating stairs, tight passageways, and dimly lit lad-

ART BAR | SANDRO CHIA'S VIVID MURAL AT PALIO.

hotograph by Steven Freeman.

ders to get to the roof. The price has gone up $1, to $5.

PLACE TO BREAK UP

MR. TANG'S 50 MOTT STREET; 233-8898

Wedged into the chicken-leg cricks of Chinatown's streets, Mr. Tang's has one immediate advantage as a quarreler's haven—you couldn't find the place again even if you wanted to. So if you untie the knot here, as opposed to at the SoHo bistro du jour, you won't have the misfortune of stumbling upon the traumatic landmark next time you go spring shoe-shopping. Then there's the food, which is decent and inexpensive—perfect for something that you're only going to push sullenly around the plate. Finally, there's the ambience: fluorescent-lit, disco-Deco interior with widespread tables (no communal seating) and a tenement-condition fishtank filled with wilting sea life that just might be more miserable than you. Best of all, you can bawl your eyes out down Bayard Street, and no one will even notice you.

DUCK AND UNCOVER | OUTDOOR SEX AT THE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY.

PLACE TO GET BACK TOGETHER

EL QUIJOTE 226 WEST 23RD STREET; 929-1855

Maybe it's because it's adjacent to the Chelsea Hotel, but something about the dusky, threadbare interior of El Quijote makes it the perfect place to follow desire over reason. Long, narrow, and cavelike (it's barely lit by chandeliers and fake Tiffany lamps), it makes you forget you're anywhere your actions might have consequences and think instead you're in Vegas, baby, or on some pre-Castro-Cuba soundstage. Conquistador tchotchkes clutter the bar mirror, and the dark-eyed waiters have a touchingly haunted, zombie quality. The food continues the theme of foolish decadence: Where else in New York could you order the Daily Double (two 1¼-pound lobsters) with a pitcher of sangria to boot for just $40? The dining room is lined with mahogany leatherette two-person booths, perfect little cubbies for a tender rapprochement and possibly something a touch more intimately gratifying. Stop tilting at windmills and start tilting a glass. And then toward the hotel next door. Or . . .

PLACE TO HAVE SEX IN PUBLIC

SOUTH SIDE OF THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

When considering a public indiscretion in the naked city, one can't leave it all to impulse. It's not easy finding a place that offers enough risk of discovery to provide frisson that also has a feasible escape route should the need arise. (Rule out Jones Alley.) Ted Mooney, whose novel *Singing Into the Piano* features a very public sexual encounter, recommends "the end of the Prince Street platform on the N-R, where it disappears into darkness." Many amateurs have enjoyed rooftops. And of course there's always the West Village's pier and Central Park's Ramble.

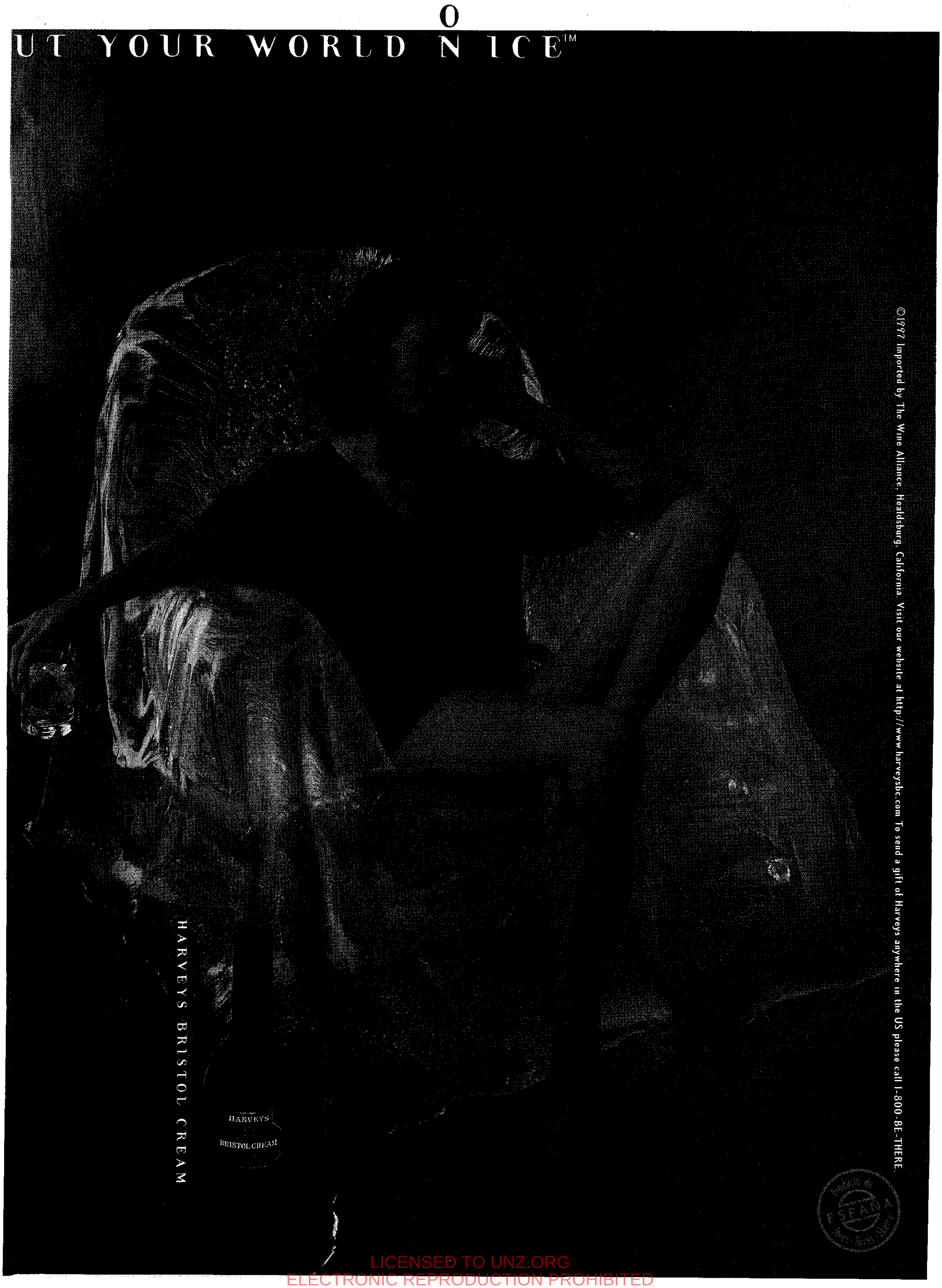
The grassy, abandoned railroad tracks that loom over Washington Street—a.k.a. Hobo Row—are difficult to reach but favored by some for moonlit sex. Elsewhere, the chill of Wall Street's predawn alleyways (such as Maiden Lane) are touted by thrill-seeking bull-marketeers. But the thicket of dogwoods and Japanese cherry blossoms surrounding the south side of the American Museum of Natural History wins points for natural cover, for the imposing structure's iconic status, and for the eerie implicit presence of thousands of marble-eyed mastodons, marsupials, and mummies watching it all from within. But be prepared to suffer the consequences: a summons to appear in court. The charge: public lewdness—a grade-B misdemeanor, which carries a maximum penalty of $300 and/or 90 days in jail.

BELLY DANCING

SERENA STUDIOS 939 EIGHTH AVENUE, NO. 403; 245-9603

Next to the closet of shimmering, spangled costumes at Serena Studios, a sign states AND IT IS WRITTEN WHOMSOEVER SHALL SHE ENTER THE CLOSET OF SERENA, SO SHALL SHE DWELL IN THE HOUSE OF BEAUTY FOREVER. So it is written, so it is done: As taught by Serena, Middle Eastern belly dance is not only beautiful; it's a lot of fun and very

Photograph by Robert Wrigh



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social. Serena patiently takes even rank beginners through the full range of shimmies, pelvic undulations, and sinuous turns. And she organizes frequent galas in the studio ballroom, where students can mingle, dance, and learn. Once you've mastered those "pulsed and clenched" hip movements, you'll find yourself sashaying down the street with a whole new confidence. ($9 per class.)

ALTERNATIVE-COMEDY NIGHT

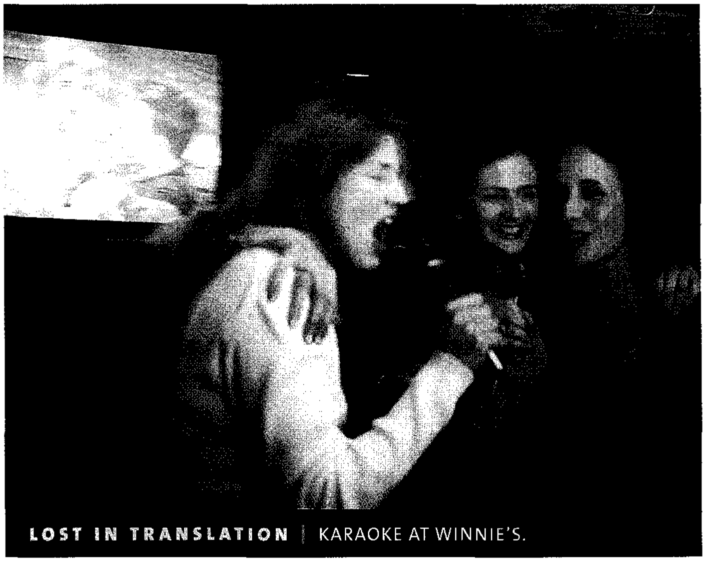
EAT IT AT LUNA LOUNGE 171 LUDLOW STREET; 260-2323

It's sad enough that anyone still sits through the old "what is the *deal* with . . ." routines that make up so much of stand-up comedy; it's sadder still that so many people believe that's all the field has to offer. On Monday nights at 8, at Luna Lounge, comedy is a free-form experience, left open for reinvention. Janeane Garofalo and various members of *The State* and *Saturday Night Live* turn up regularly, and there are lots of post–Spalding Gray personal monologues. Some of it is successful, some is not, but none of it is Jay Leno warmed over. As Amanda Schatz, an MTV talent scout who is the show's producer, says, "It's an intimate environment where you can see your favorite performers do stuff that would never happen anywhere else." Or you can see four amiable freaks in dime-store costumes and glitter-encrusted wings performing hits from the *Krofft Supershow*. Same price either way: $5 at the door for a seat and a drink.

JAZZ JUKEBOX

CORNER BISTRO 331 WEST 4TH STREET; 242-9502

That so few of the city's bars stock jazz in their jukeboxes is a true quality-of-life crime. But the Corner Bistro, famous for its burger, takes a stand against this uncivil trend with a Rowe jukebox stocked with an exquisitely tasteful selection of jazz CDs. The collection is curated by the bartenders themselves, and includes Art Blakey, Sarah Vaughan, Dave Brubeck, Charlie Parker, Zoot Sims, Chet Baker, Thelonious Monk, and, of course, John Coltrane. During peak weekend hours, the crowd's din, ricocheting off the pressed-tin ceiling, becomes an impenetrable sound barrier. But most nights you can comfortably enjoy your picks (still three songs for $1). Or else come for lunch when the place is sunlit and the regulars sip coffee at the bar while Ella Fitzgerald's voice fills the room.



LOST IN TRANSLATION | KARAOKE AT WINNIE'S.

SALSA CLUB

LATIN QUARTER 2551 BROADWAY, AT 95TH STREET; 864-7600.

People may patronize Jimmy's Bronx Cafe in order to see and be seen, and the Copacabana wins the longevity award as a Latin landmark, but for all-around fun it's gotta be Latin Quarter. Formerly known as Club Broadway, the three-year-old joint has some of the best live acts around, including Gran Combo, Oro Solido, Tito Nieves and La India. It's nothing fancy: walk up a long flight of stairs; past the metal detectors; and into the dark, crowded room. But the largely Puerto Rican and Dominican crowd comes from all corners, dressed to the nines, ready to dance till they drop. Admission is $10 to $20, depending on your gender and what night of the week you show up; a large four-sided bar serves whatever it'll take to get you back on your feet and moving to the music.

KARAOKE BAR

WINNIE'S BAR & RESTAURANT
104 BAYARD STREET; 732-2384

Describing a tavern as having a *Star Wars*–bar ambience has become something of a cliché, but when it's apt, it's apt. This sad-sack Chinatown joint has seen two gang murders, and on one recent Sunday night the crowd consisted of a toothless woman, a cross-eyed man with a mushed head, and a midget. Two regulars took the stage (such as it is) and entertained the troops with breathy renditions of such seventies favorites as Bread's "Baby I'm-a Want You" ($1 per song). The young hipsters who long ago "discovered" the place, and who want to keep this tiny window into another dimension an insider's secret, will cringe to see its name in print. But everyone deserves the chance to pull up a stool here—to rekindle their dysfunctional romance with karaoke, and perhaps to belt out a warbled version of "Jolene."

CO-ED QUEER BAR

MEOW MIX 269 EAST HOUSTON STREET; 254-0688

Gay boys who've tired of the all-too-prevalent gender divide in queer life and baby dykes who'd rather have a beer with all of their friends than stumble around a full-moon drumming circle have claimed Meow Mix as a fully-formed co-ed foothold on the Lower East Side. Sure, it slants toward the lesbian end of the spectrum, but no one's counting. This low-key bar, opened in 1995 and run by woman-about-town Brooke Webster, has live music and D.J.'s almost every night. Don't expect Janis Ian or Indigo Girls, though, because the kids at Meow Mix rock out to queer or woman-fronted bands like Sexpod, the Toilet Boys, or the newly hot Tinkle. The monthly Xena Night packs in the kay-ay-ay-aying Lucy Lawless–loving sisters, and D.J.'s like Lily of the Valley, Ms. Guy, Lizerace, and Frida spin records that make everyone want to dance. Unfortunately, Meow Mix has no cabaret license, so the staff has to be strict about the bump and grind.

Photograph by Andre Lambertson/Sal

WHERE TO GO WHEN TWO'S A CROWD

I Vant to Be Alone

If there's one factor that keeps New Yorkers from going out unaccompanied (without trying desperately to pick someone up), it's fear: fear of feeling self-conscious, or being known as "that guy" at the end of the bar wobbling his way toward another Harvey's Bristol Cream. But a drink on one's own can be a very pleasant thing indeed, if one takes it in the proper setting.

"Someday, all the experiences you have will well up in your psyche, and your hand will just start writing," said Bill, a Baxter Pub (79 Baxter Street; 374-9119) regular, as he pressed his palm against mine. Not that I'd asked. A typical Irish bar located in Chinatown, and full of characters like Bill, Baxter's is a perfect place to go if you're alone but not aloof.

In a similar vein, the Subway Inn (143 East 60th Street; 223-8929), with its dim red Brady-era lighting, is a delightfully downmarket find for lone drinkers stranded in Bloomingdale's territory. And at Mona's (224 Avenue B, between 13th and 14th Streets; 353-3780), you might not be able to penetrate the old guard in front, who favor Lawrence Welk over the Knicks-Nets game, but there's always the pool table and the excellent CD jukebox.

Even a dive bar's high character-to-couples ratio can't compare to that of the archetypal lonely-guy spot: the topless bar. I had to circle the block before gathering the courage to enter TriBeCa's tatty Baby Doll Lounge (34 White Street; 226-4870), but there's no good reason for such squeamishness: It's just a seedy, crowded place like any other, except that a man sitting in the corner is paying to lick a dancer's heel. I enjoyed my drink and left.

The surprise on Ludlow and Orchard Streets—aside from the lines, which, like dress codes and velvet ropes, are anathema to solo travelers—is the Living Room (84 Stanton Street; 533-7235). This welcoming, candlelit space is as comfortable as home itself, with so little attitude that it sells $2 cans of Miller. Go ahead, read the paper and put your feet up.

Despite warnings about the services I'd be offered if I hung around hotel bars by myself, at the Pierre hotel's Rotunda (2 East 61st Street; 838-8000) I was too busy sinking into luxury's lap to notice that of any other. The waiter was surprised to seat a party of one in the soaring, frescoed room, but he grandly waived the minimum charge for occupying one of its dainty tables. I had to restrain myself from asking the highly accommodating staff to put the drinks on my room tab when I finally rose to leave.

Things get even better at Bemelmans Bar, in the Carlyle hotel (35 East 76th Street; 744-1600), which gets the nod over its sister lounge, Cafe Carlyle, for its more intimate, clubby feel (the much lower cover charge for the music doesn't hurt either). The cozy banquettes give you a great view of the piano player and of the various suits, tourists, and tarted-up lounge lizards, even if no propositions are forthcoming.

The overall winner is the charming Mary's Restaurant (42 Bedford Street; 741-3387), tucked away in an old townhouse. The downstairs bar is a freewheeling salon of sorts, where a rotating cast debates celebrity cookbooks, sexual orientation, and other matters close to George Michael's heart. The bartender's kindred taste for Maker's Mark clinched it for me. Even if you've got your head deep in the latest McBain mystery, it always feels good to connect.

ANDREW ROSENBERG

Illustration by Mark Matcho.

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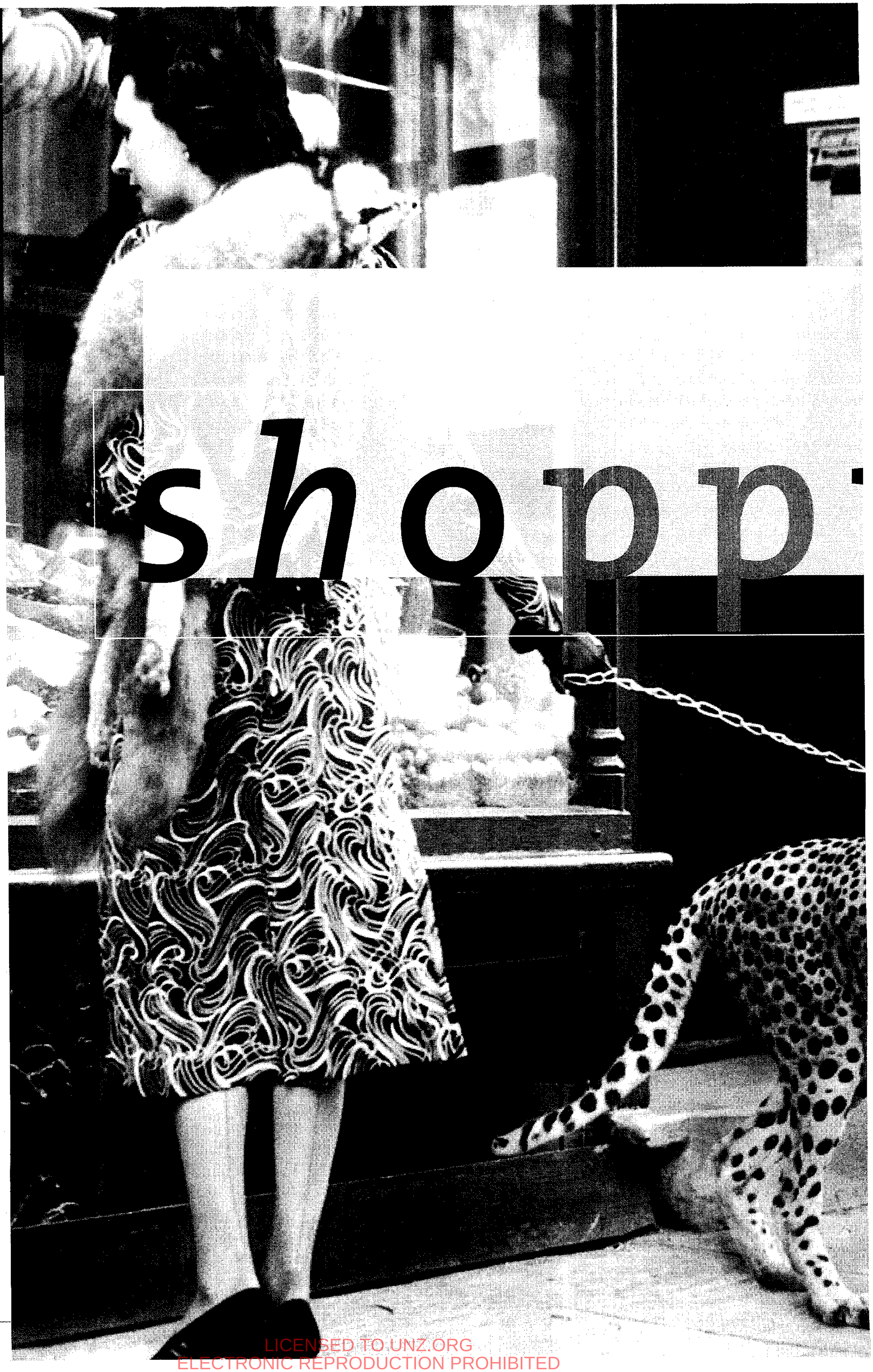
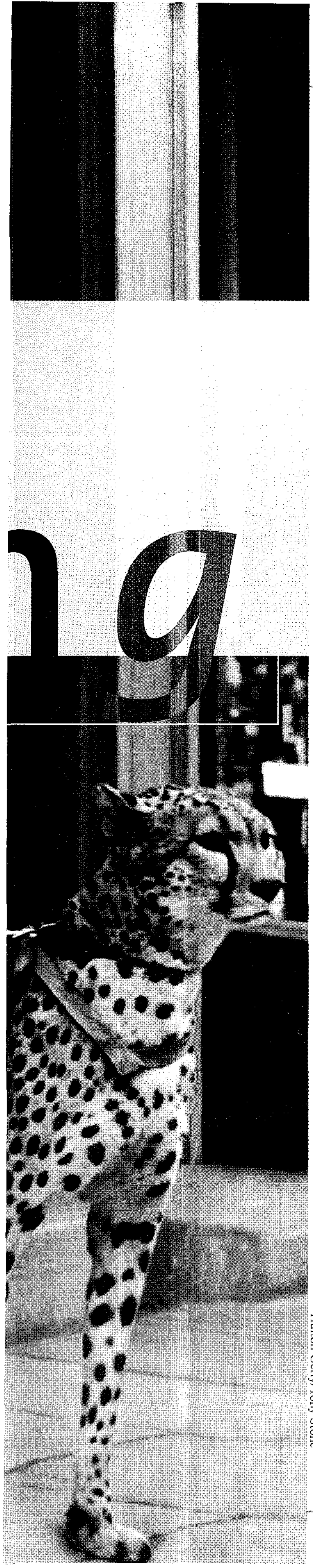




Hulton Getty/Tony Stone

TREAT YOURSELF TO A SILK-FILLED BEDSPREAD, HUNT DOWN AN EAMES SOFA, SMOKE A MAJOR-LEAGUE STOGIE

VINTAGE SOFAS

REGENERATION MODERN FURNITURE 38 RENWICK STREET; 741-2102

The problem with contemporary sofas is that they're invariably ugly. That may explain why mid-twentieth-century pieces, with their clean, restrained lines, have become increasingly popular among those who adhere to the simple-chic aesthetic. Unfortunately, these things never seem to surface at flea markets, and if one does, chances are it will cost as much as a decent used car. But tucked away on an obscure TriBeCa side street is reGeneration, a transplanted East Village shop that specializes in vintage communal seating. All the icons are here: Risom, Nelson, Wormley, Jacobsen, Gibbings. And unlike at most downtown furniture boutiques, the prices are surprisingly reasonable. A Florence Knoll sofa can be had for $1,800, a Charles Eames "Compact" sofa for $2,000.

CUSTOM SHIRTMAKER

KABBAZ, KELLY & SONS 903 MADISON AVENUE, AT 72ND STREET; 861-7700

Shirtmakers Alexander S. Kabbaz and his wife, Joelle M. Kelly, are artists of the highest degree. And as they charge $350 to $500 per handcrafted shirt (minimum first order of six), they'd better be. They start by taking no fewer than 37 measurements—41 for female customers—and from the resulting data, they construct a paper pattern. Then comes a laundered muslin "try on" shirt, another fitting, further adjustments, a preliminary shirt, still further adjustments if necessary, and finally the completed garment. The staff, who hand-stitch the monograms and otherwise fill your order in-house, will guide you through the choice of 3,226 of the finest Swiss, English, and Italian fabrics. Kabbaz, Kelly even offers its clients a laundry service, guaranteeing a long, loving life for your private collection. For the best bargain in custom shirtmaking, try CEGO (174 Fifth Avenue, between 22nd and 23rd Streets, Room 301; 620-4512). CEGO runs a wholesale fabrics business, enabling it to get great deals on top-quality materials. Where others in this range charge $180 to $190 per shirt, CEGO can deliver for $75 to $135 (minimum first order, two shirts).

HANDHELD COMPUTERS

RCS COMPUTER EXPERIENCE 575 MADISON AVENUE, AT 56TH STREET; 949-6935

If you're among the legions who'd be lost without your digitally organized contact list, meeting notes, to-do list, etc., you will find your mecca in RCS. Since it's no doubt time to trade in your outdated handheld (the one purchased two weeks ago) for, say, the 3Com Palm III organizer or the Psion Series 5 minicomputer, what better destination for you than a store that piously displays its wares in sleek, halogen-lit glass vitrines? RCS has a well-trained staff that knows its gear and stocks all the must-have extras, like LandWare MicroMoney software. And RCS has wisely hooked up with handheld-user groups, hosting recent gatherings of the New York PalmPilot Users Group (trade shareware! Covet thy neighbor's Cross stylus pen!), thus justifying the pretension that theirs is no mere store but a full-fledged "computer experience."

SILK FLOWERS

PANY'S SILK FLOWERS
146 WEST 28TH STREET; 645-9526

In *Wild Man Blues,* Woody Allen finally points out what everyone has thought at least once when someone shows up with a bouquet: that getting flowers can be something of a hassle, what with having to trim the stems and find a vase. Not if they come from Pany, which stocks a large hothouse's worth of intricately textured, richly colored silk blooms, the kind that cry out to be purchased in bunches of two dozen, thrown in a grand vase, and perennially displayed in all their glory on that antique piece in the corner of the living room. Pany's roses (more than 30 varieties), hydrangeas, and lady's slippers have too much crafted integrity to ever be maligned as fake flowers—they're definitely authentic something. And they're available here at wholesale prices (sunflowers start at $1.25; a lush crystal rose runs $6.50). The blooms are an amateur arranger's dream, with stems that blend and blossoms that can be kept coyly closed or manipulated entirely open. The best part: The vase will never cloud over with that scary stuff that someone has to clean.

GUITARS

MANDOLIN BROTHERS 629 FOREST AVENUE, STATEN ISLAND; 718-981-8585

Mandolin Brothers has about a thousand instruments in stock at any one time—everything from late-nineteenth-century Appalachian open-back banjos to 1920s Gibson mandolins. The shop straddles the line between showroom and museum but enforces a strict hands-on policy. "Customers are welcome to play anything," says founder Stanley Jay, "and they're welcome to ask a million questions." Jay's got plenty of stories to tell, too, like about the time five years ago when Paul McCartney's circa-1961 Hofner violin bass from his Beatles days needed fixing. McCartney sent it over on the Concorde, accompanied by his technician, John Hamel. For three and a half days, Hamel stood vigil over the bass as a Mandolin Brothers repairman worked on some problem frets. Meanwhile, a friend of Jay's, hearing that the bass was at the shop, dropped by to get a look at it. Jay ushered his friend into the back room, where he knelt down beside the instrument and kissed it. McCartney's technician, suddenly alert, nearly attacked him.

USED WEDDING DRESSES

MICHAEL'S 1041 MADISON AVENUE, BY APPOINTMENT ONLY; 737-7273

Camping out two days in advance for a good spot on line at the Vera Wang late-summer sample sale isn't the only way a frugal bride-to-be can get a swank wedding dress. She can buy one that's been ever-so-gently used at Michael's, which manages to get hold of some of the most sophisticated gowns around, stocking an impressive collection of more than 100 dresses from all the big designers (everyone from Amsale to Candace Solomon's One of a Kind Bride). Dresses range from $395 to $1,500, karma not included. "Every girl wants to know if the bride is still married," says a shop manager, "but we don't keep records on that."

VENETIAN GLASS

THE END OF HISTORY 548½ HUDSON; 647-7598

Though it has been open for just six months and has no budget to adver-

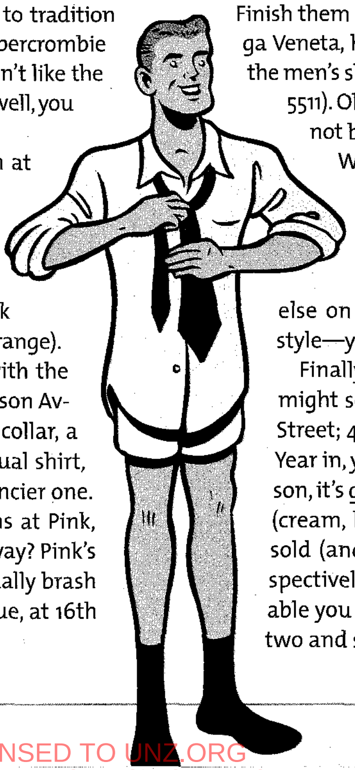
A GETTING-DRESSED GUIDE FOR MEN

Thread Winners

Let us first decree that the era of Underwear as Fashion Statement has passed. We give the nod to tradition with the $16.50 full-cut cotton boxer at Abercrombie & Fitch (199 Water Street; 809-9000). If you don't like the way they bunch up under jeans or snug pants, well, you know where to get Jockey shorts.

For socks, we're partial to the irregulars bin at Century 21 (22 Cortlandt Street; 227-9092)—they cut down on the misery when only one of a pair makes it back from the laundry. But when cheap just won't do, Paul Stuart (Madison Avenue at 45th Street; 682-0320) has a nook of luxurious wool and cotton socks (in the $20 range).

For shirts, we couldn't be more satisfied with the $145 Continental from Thomas Pink (520 Madison Avenue, at 53rd Street; 838-1928). A distinctive collar, a flattering cut—technically, it's the store's casual shirt, but rare is the occasion when you'll need a fancier one. You won't find your moody grays and browns at Pink, but isn't it time you gave that look a rest anyway? Pink's bright shirts will look awfully smart with equally brash silk neckties from Paul Smith (108 Fifth Avenue, at 16th Street; 627-9770).



At Camouflage (141 Eighth Avenue, at 17th Street; 741-5173) you'll want the plain-front light-wool trousers (in khaki, navy, and seaweed; $295) from TSE. No one will ever mistake them for Dockers. Finish them off with a tasteful black leather belt from Bottega Veneta, hidden in the basement (with the luggage and the men's shoes) of 635 Madison Avenue (at 59th Street; 371-5511). Okay, it's $170. But consider how much you save by not buying the $600 crocodile model.

We know it'll be controversial in some quarters to endorse a $525 pair of shoes, but people who wear Fenestrier (available at the Robert Clergerie boutique, 681 Madison Avenue, at 61st Street; 207-8600) can hardly put anything else on their feet. The shoes are in a plain classical style—you'll wear them for years.

Finally, for a jacket, we make a recommendation that might seem painfully obvious. It's Agnes b. (79 Greene Street; 431-4339), the thinking man's Banana Republic. Year in, year out, it covers the basics with style. This season, it's got a beautiful array of khaki suits in three tints (cream, brown, and green). The jackets and pants are sold (and can be worn) separately ($340 and $178, respectively), a wardrobe-stretching bargain that will enable you to go back and get those Fenestrier shoes. Buy two and save enough to afford the crocodile belt.

Illustration by Mark Matc

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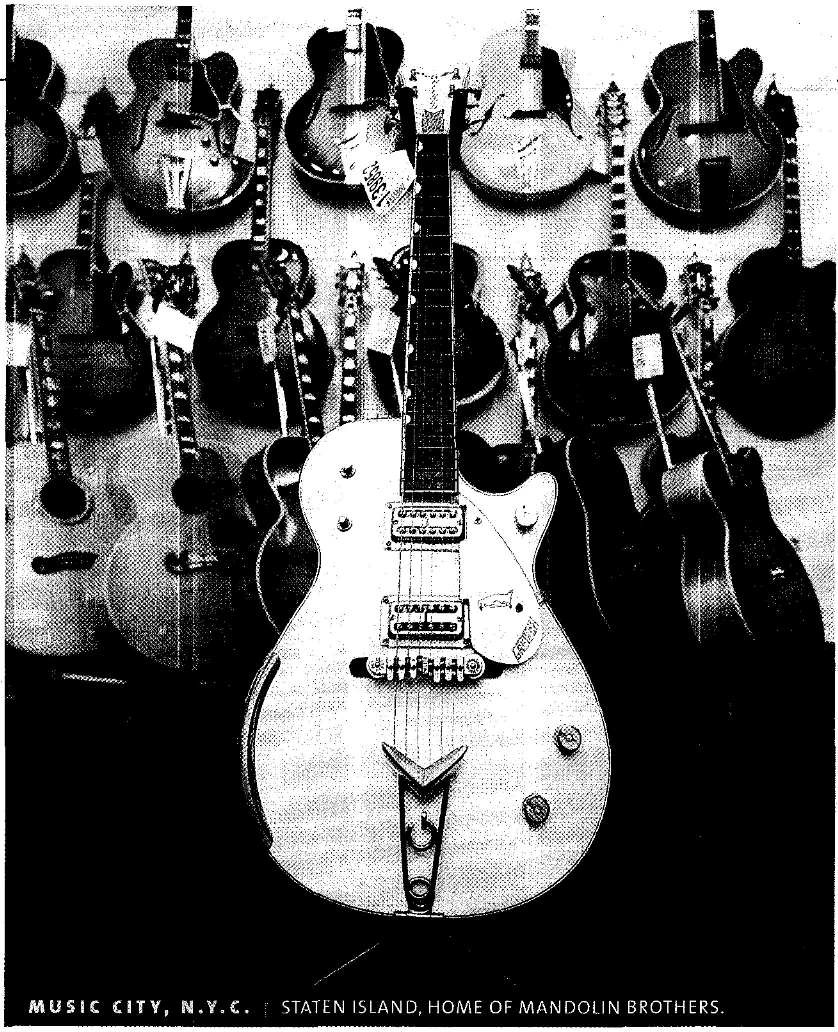

MUSIC CITY, N.Y.C. STATEN ISLAND, HOME OF MANDOLIN BROTHERS.

tise, the End of History furniture boutique has already become a regular destination for interior decorators and hawk-eyed West Village locals on their Sunday promenades. The house special, handblown Venetian glass from the forties to the seventies, ranges from $30 for an orange bud vase to $2,500 for a two-and-a-half-foot-tall peacock-blue genie bottle with stopper. Owner Stephen Saunders, an avid collector—he says he joined the Boy Scouts so he could be on the rummage-sale committee—is well versed in each item's history, whether it was culled from an estate sale or unearthed by one of the many buyers who scour the country on his behalf. He's done such a great job arranging his eye candy in color-amplifying clusters, you, too, will feel the need for a minimum of twenty pieces to showcase their full rainbow effect.

WRAPPING

TAKASHIMAYA 693 FIFTH AVENUE, BETWEEN 54TH AND 55TH STREETS; 350-0100

Takashimaya's prices may be a tad elitist (a bar of soap can run you $18), but when it comes to gift wrapping, the luxury-goods store is entirely democratic: Whether you buy the $12 lacquered spoon or the $6,800 South Sea pearl necklace, the *objet* will come nestled regally on a bed of gold paper that's been folded elaborately into a square box that's been slid inside another square box that's been placed in a triangular shopping bag with silky black rope handles. The packaging, all subtle beige tones and intricate detail, appropriately heralds the grandest of gifts and makes an event out of even the smallest token of affection, proving the old adage false—it's not so much the thought that counts; it's the wrapping.

FLEA-MARKET BOOTH

ZESTY MEYERS AND EVAN SNYDERMAN
718-599-4385

If you happen to be a habitué of the 26th Street flea market, you've probably noticed the two scraggly guys who deal in modern furniture. Located in the "free lot" near the corner of Sixth Avenue and 24th Street, their all-too-finite parcel of pavement doesn't re-

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Photograph by Bernd Auers.

Men traveled across oceans
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Even the most beautiful
woman in the bar knew
she could not compete with
a place like this.
EL SAN JUAN HOTEL & CASINO

semble a flea-market booth so much as it does an interior culled from the pages of *Wallpaper* magazine (minus the scantily clad models). On a recent Sunday, the booth's proprietors had artfully arranged four red Eames chairs around a Florence Knoll desk and a pair of matching credenzas. Anchoring the "room" was a funky Swedish shag rug from the sixties. Local retailers hate these guys, and no wonder: The prices on their excellent offerings are usually half of what you would expect to pay in a SoHo boutique. Those who prefer to sleep in on Sunday can visit R, the boys' Williamsburg furniture shop (326 Wythe Avenue).

TROPICAL FISH

NEW WORLD 5 WEST 8TH STREET; 460-9390

Rudy may be cracking down on exotic-saltwater-fish smuggling, but the market for red-eared sliders and hyper-green open brain corals is still strong. If the need for a $10,000 Asian arowana (the object of the recent fishy-bust) should suddenly arise, the staff at New World can help you track down a *legal* source. And although many aficionados prefer to travel to far-flung specialists in exotic places like New Rochelle for their 200-gallon tanks, water-purification systems, instructional tomes, and advice, New World has it all. A rare oasis in New York, its black-lit space, with gurgling pumps, gently swaying plants, and very, very calm purple lobsters, soothes even the most jagged psyche. You'll find yourself meditating on important questions like "Shall I line the tank for my Brazilian red sea horses with matching red sand? Or create a jungle of mini-kelp, living rocks, and Fiji leather coral for my leopard-spotted Tesselata eel?"

NEWSSTANDS FOR EARLIEST SUNDAY *TIMES*

SUPEREGO CORPORATION 1140 FIRST AVENUE, AT 62ND STREET; 838-6960

K&H DELI 448 HUDSON STREET; 620-0845

314 SIXTH AVENUE, AT WEST 3RD STREET NO PHONE

Media junkies across the city may all swear that their newsstand is the first one to receive copies of the Sunday *Times* on Saturday evening—but we went and did a bit of investigating to find out where the paper of record lands

GREEN FORAYS | THE CHELSEA GARDEN CENTER.

first. There are three newsstands that bear that honor, according to sources at the *Times*. The first drop-offs of the later-breaking sections of the paper (Section A, City Section, Week in Review, Sunday Styles, etc.) leave the production plant in College Point, Queens, between 5:30 and 6 P.M. (depending on closing schedules) and arrive and are assembled sometime between 6 and 6:30 P.M. at Superego Corporation, K&H Deli, and an unnamed newsstand at 314 Sixth Avenue. But if you're looking for fresh apartment listings, you're already out of luck by then: They go up online at midnight Friday night at www.nytimes.com.

GARDENING SUPPLIES

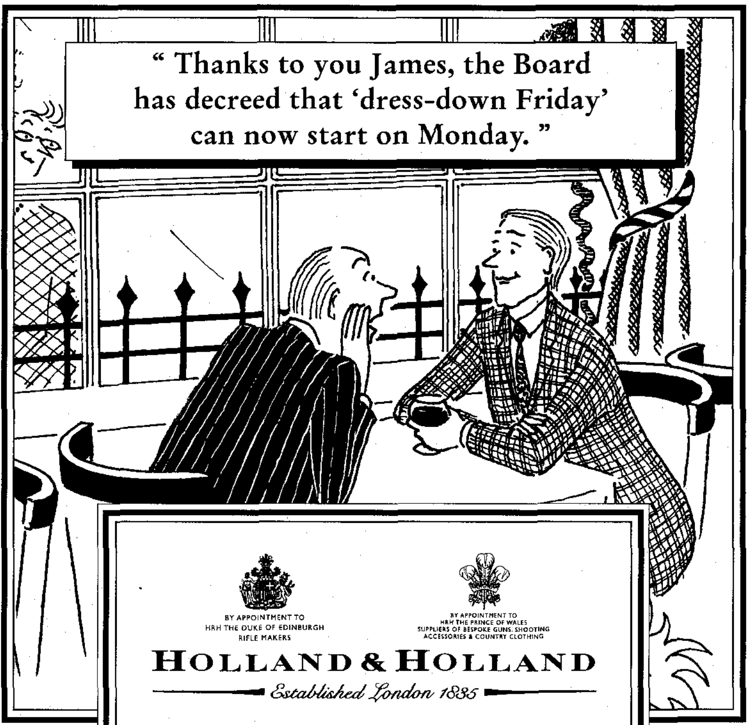
CHELSEA GARDEN CENTER 205 NINTH AVENUE, AT 22ND STREET; 929-2477

For the lucky few New Yorkers who have a serious need for a birdbath or can actually cultivate their own backyard rose garden, the Chelsea Garden Center offers 500 different seeds, 900 rose breeds, and more than 50 different trees. Included on the 45-person staff are three full-time garden designers who will make house calls to your window box or rooftop jungle, help you plan the transformation, then send delivery and installation teams. The packed high-end-gardening-goods store, which opened in an adjacent space last year, has flowering bonsais, Noguchi-style water fountains, topiary how-to books, and the perfect shears with which to sculpt your own Jeff Koons knockoff. Just don't ask for a cement garden gnome—Chelsea Garden seems to have something against them.

MAPS OF OLD NEW YORK

PAGEANT BOOK & PRINT SHOP 114 WEST HOUSTON STREET; 674-5296

Though its original 9th Street location, where Michael Caine lurked in *Hannah and Her Sisters,* is now Pageant Bar & Grill, Pageant has kept up its tradition of vending the finest antique maps, prints, and books about New York City in its location on Houston Street, where it moved in 1994. This is the place to scout out if you'd like to see what your neighborhood looked like in the eighteenth century, pre-ATMs, –subway stations, and –Papaya Kings. The cozy but well-organized store also stocks architectural prints, theatrical programs, original turn-of-


" Thanks to you James, the Board has decreed that 'dress-down Friday' can now start on Monday. "

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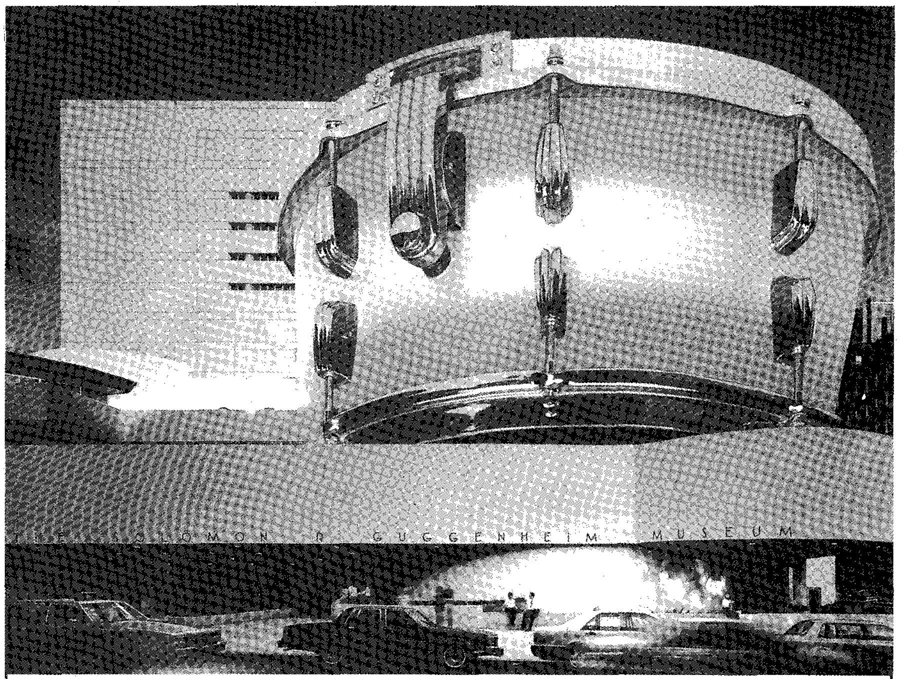

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Enjoy jazz and cocktails in the Frank Lloyd Wright Rotunda, Friday and Saturday nights 5-8pm. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Avenue (at 88th Street). Information: 212 423-3500

hotograph: Opposite page, Amy Freeth

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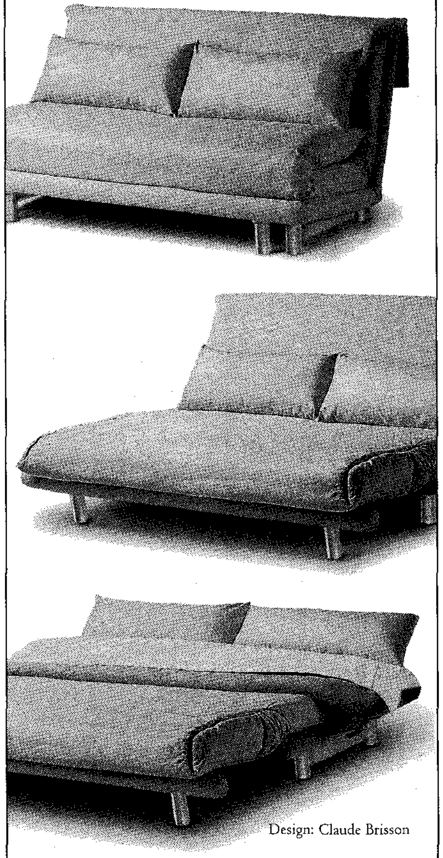
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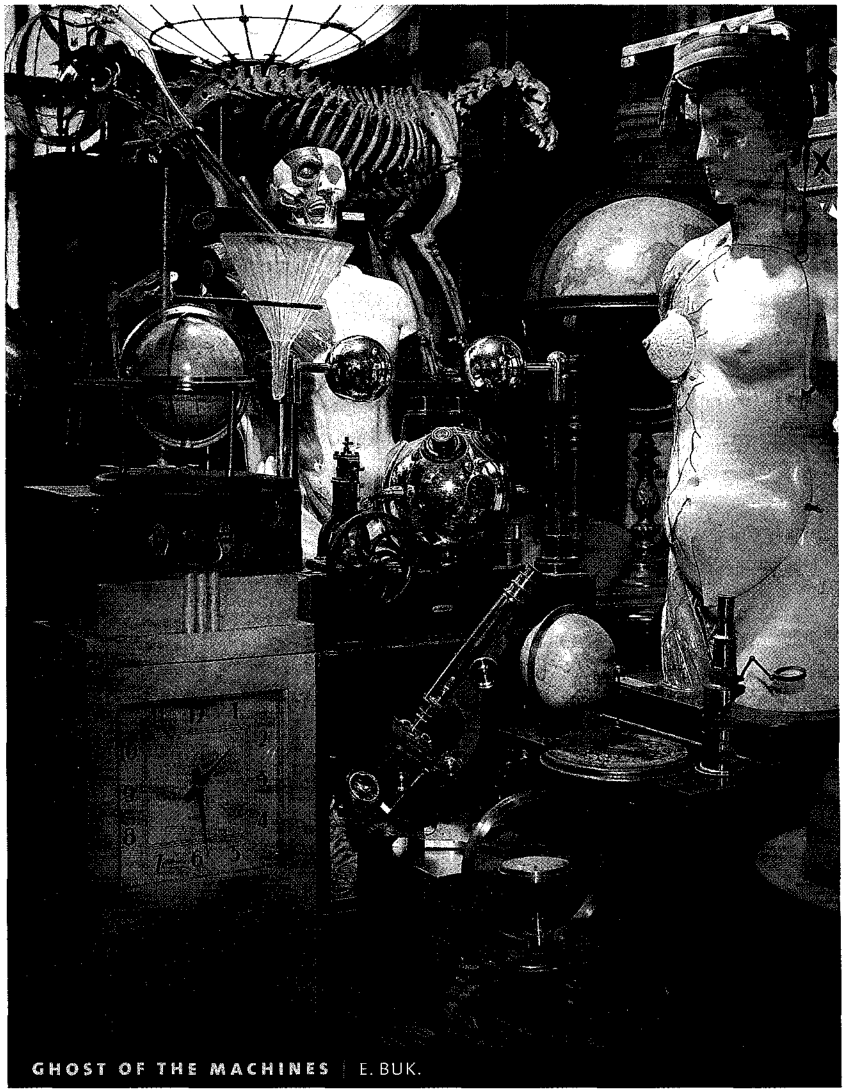

GHOST OF THE MACHINES | E. BUK.

the-century photographs from glass negatives, fashion ads, old postcards, and antique magazines that prominently feature New York City (the cover of a copy of *Scientific American* from 1883, for instance, heralds the "opening of the great suspension bridge between New York and Brooklyn"). A virtual mini-shrine to the wonders of Old New York, Pageant has the feel of a private museum where you can either buy the artwork or just admire it.

MACHINE AGE OBJECTS

E. BUK 151 SPRING STREET; 226-6891

It doesn't advertise. It has never been featured in *Elle Decor.* And Isaac Mizrahi doesn't shop there. No wonder that after twenty years, E. Buk is still the best-kept secret in New York's image-conscious design community. In fact, most who pass this iconoclastic SoHo establishment do so without realizing it. But study the window display closely, and you will notice an inconspicuous brass sign: E. BUK ANTIQUES . . . BY CHANCE OR APPOINTMENT. Even if Mr. Buk is in, there is no assurance of admittance—it's mood-dependent. Once inside, however, you won't be disappointed by the inventory, the kind of stuff that ends up in the Smithsonian. A recent trip unearthed Raymond Loewy's circa-1948 Hallicrafters television set ($700), John R. Morgan's iconic 1936 Waterwitch outboard motor ($1,500); and a magnificent Henry Troemner bullion scale ($7,500), the kind used in banks and assay offices to weigh gold bars. Be forewarned: The store has no aisles per se, and items are stacked chockablock, from floor to ceiling. But where else are you going to

Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

find an authentic World War II flight suit or architectural drawings of the West Point Military Academy? “My place isn’t trendy,” declares the irascible E. Buk. “Don’t come here looking for metal medicine cabinets.”

CIGARS

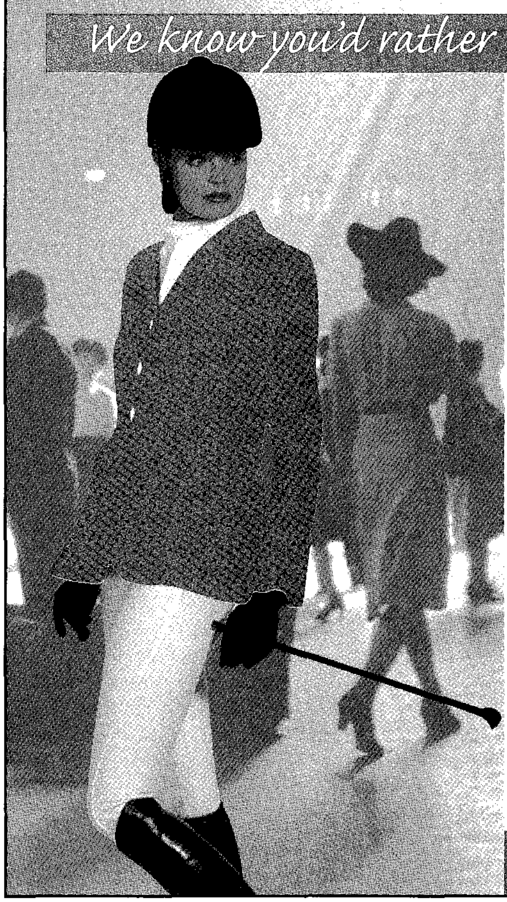
J.R. TOBACCO 11 EAST 45TH STREET, 983-4160; OR 1 WALL STREET COURT, 233-6620

Cigar smoking is about as pretentious a fad as there is, and if the city never saw another model-clogged cigar bar, we’d all be better off. Still, one needn’t let the noisiness of all those posers detract from the pleasure of a fine stogie. If you’re in the market for the best but not particularly desperate to impress anyone, J.R. Tobacco is the place to go. All the sticks are as cheap as they get anywhere, and the only celebrity you’ll ever get snubbed for is Mayor Giuliani. A third of the cigars are store-brand; the $3.25 El Rey del Mundos are probably the best value in town. Or, if you find some extra cash burning a hole in your pocket, vary the routine and visit Arnold’s (323 Madison Avenue, at 42nd Street; 697-1477), which carries just about every cigar over $5.

CONTEMPORARY FURNITURE

TOTEM DESIGN GROUP 71 FRANKLIN STREET; 925-5506

TOTEM is more than a furniture store; it’s an acronym—for The Objects That Evoke Meaning. Pretentious name notwithstanding, this new TriBeCa boutique has a noble purpose: to manufacture and distribute furniture by talented young designers here and abroad. Here is an antidote for anyone who has grumbled about the dearth of decent contemporary furniture. TOTEM represents 25 different designers, ranging from Nick Crosbie and his whimsical inflatable furnishings to Lloyd Schwan and his minimal and vaguely retro pieces. Other highlights include James Irvine’s sofa bed ($3,490), a sophisticated alternative to the ubiquitous futon couch; Angel Monzon’s very James Bond coffee table ($870); and Ian Hume’s Zip Code lights ($150–$330), luminous fixtures that feature interchangeable zippered jackets. “This is furniture for people who are ready to graduate from IKEA,” explains co-owner Gail Schultz. “Our goal is to bring cool design to the mass market.”



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BEDDING

BARK 369 ATLANTIC AVENUE, BOERUM HILL, BROOKLYN; 718-625-8997

Formerly an official photographer for New York City, Lynda Downey decided to follow her heart and pursue the softest, most luxurious bedding and bath products around. "I am a person who loves rituals," says the appropriately named Downey. "I love bathing and sleeping." Surrounded by the antique shops and Middle Eastern eateries of Boerum Hill, Downey's Bark is filled with Egyptian-cotton blankets, hand-picked linens, soft throws, and silk pillows in a range of vivid hues (as well as the requisite white). The store's centerpiece is a steel-framed bed covered with a silk-cotton quilted spread and Downey's pièce de résistance, a Chinese-silk comforter filled with silk floss (the gossamer material in traditional Chinese jackets). Other favorites, intermingled with silk kimonos, nightdresses, and bath delicacies from Aesop, Robert Isabell, and I Coloniali, include Pashmina throws and a silk sheet-and-bedspread set from India.

BOTÁNICA

SANTOS VARIETY 77 AVENUE C; 260-3818

If the returns promised in the afterlife by monotheistic religions don't satisfy your need for instant spiritual gratification, take matters into your own hands and head over to the East Village's Santos Variety. *Botánica* is Spanish for *botany* but is commonly understood to mean a store that caters to the Latino and Caribbean communities' demand for prepared aromatic plant baths promising to take away evil, dispel jinxes, or awaken and cleanse your soul. Perhaps an all-night party has left your house feeling haunted? At Santos Variety, there is a "floor wash" called La Escova, "the broom," to help you do the cleaning. Short on cash? An aerosol spray containing "Indian spirits" promises abundance and wealth. Santos Variety doesn't offer psychic readings, or spiritual cleansings by an actual healer, like botánicas in other parts of the city that may require more involvement than you want—consider this store, with its huge variety of possibly helpful oils and sprays, a vast Rite-Aid for the soul.

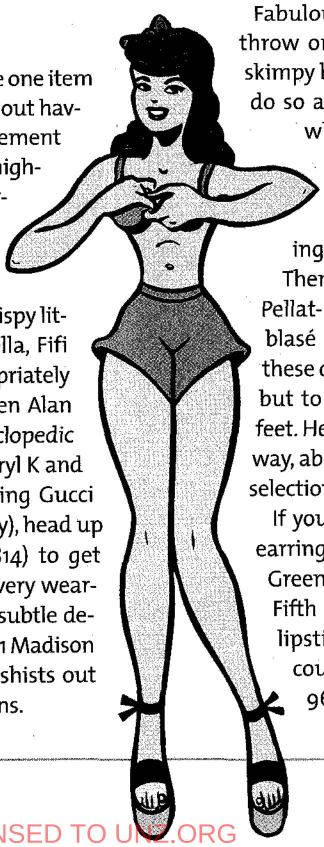
IMPORTED CERAMICS

CERAMICA 59 THOMPSON STREET; 941-1307

You don't want to be perceived as a cheapskate—after all, these are friends. Friends with good memories. So what's a New Yorker with five wedding ceremonies this summer to do? Forget Tiffany and proceed directly to Ceramica. This downtown establishment, located on a quiet street in SoHo, has developed a reputation as a chic wedding-registry alternative. Ceramica has something artful for every budget, from humble but decorative $9 candlesticks to an impressive $200 serving platter. The less expensive pieces are Moroccan, but the majority of the inventory is Italian, imported primarily from Umbria and southern Tuscany. Those who can distinguish among in-

A GETTING-DRESSED GUIDE FOR WOMEN

She's Gotta Have It



Once upon a time, underpants were the one item you could put on in the morning without having to worry about the fashion statement they would or wouldn't make. But now that the high-visibility bra strap and the creep-up-outside-your-pants Gucci thong has ruined all that, we'd play it safe and make our picks at the boudoirlike La Petite Coquette (51 University Place; 473-2478), where owner Rebecca Apsan gets her hand on wispy little undernothings from designers like Cosabella, Fifi Chachanil, and La Perla. For pants that are appropriately hip-slung, we'd recommend a trip over to Steven Alan (60 Wooster Street; 334-6354), home of an encyclopedic selection of trousers from style pioneers like Daryl K and Pixie Yates. If you're already over those crippling Gucci slingbacks (they work better with a skirt, anyway), head up to Sergio Rossi (835 Madison Avenue; 396-4814) to get grounded in some quintessentially Italian and very wearable mules, sandals, or boots. But if you're over subtle design, hit Prada (45 East 57th Street; 308-2332; or 841 Madison Avenue; 327-4200), which is knocking shoe-fetishists out with sculptured lucite heels and two-tone designs.

Fabulous though you look just like that, you'd better throw on a shirt before facing the world. Start with a skimpy black tank from BeBe (six of your officemates will do so as well) or a comfy cotton tee from Three Dots, which makes a souped-up Hanes (available at Barneys, Madison Avenue at 61st Street; 826-8900) and has mysteriously become the it obsession of every it girl in town. Must be the ever-emerging palette of colors and flattering necklines.

Then top it off with a cashmere cardigan from Lucien Pellat-Finet (226 Elizabeth Street; 343-7033) tied oh-so-blasé around the shoulders. And if you're doing socks these days, we'd pick up ours from—well, we'd say Fogal, but to hell with paying $45 to hide your unpedicured feet. Head to National Wholesale Liquidators (632 Broadway, above Houston Street; 979-2400), which has a great selection of trouser socks ranging in price from $1 to $5.99.

If you must accessorize, keep it simple with a pair of earrings from the ultra-insider's choice, Ted Muehling (47 Greene Street; 431-3825; also at Bergdorf Goodman, 754 Fifth Avenue; 753-7300). Stick your keys and your Nars lipstick in a pretty little Desmo bag (in leather, of course) from Peter Herman (118 Thompson Street; 966-9050).

Illustration by Mark Matc

WEDDING BOWLS | CERAMICA.

Photograph by Amy Freeth.

tra-regional styles will note that most of the ceramics are made in the village of Deruta. The colorful designs, based on 400-year-old Renaissance patterns, would make even Pino Luongo weep with nostalgia. And yes, Martha Stewart has been seen shopping here.

HIGH-END AUDIO

SOUND BY SINGER 18 EAST 16TH STREET; 924-8600

Buying a high-end audio system may be one of life's more excruciating pleasures. The equipment is expensive, and no matter what ends up on the credit card, one always thinks one could have bought something better. The shopper has to take it slowly and listen to many pieces of equipment, substituting one component for another until the sound satisfies the senses and the soul (and empties the pocketbook). Sound by Singer, with its ten listening rooms and its wide variety of equipment, is perhaps the most comfortable place to listen and shop, but both the new Innovative Audio, in its elegant and technologically advanced basement store at 150 East 58th Street (complementing the older store, at 77 Clinton Street in Brooklyn), and the venerable Lyric Hi-Fi, at 1221 Lexington Avenue (at 82nd Street), have superb equipment. You can't really go wrong at any of them. Be brave, and take your time.

COOKING SUPPLIES

BRIDGE KITCHENWARE 214 EAST 52ND STREET; 688-4220

Having accepted the loss of the famed Lamalle Cookware, many super-serious amateur and professional chefs are finding solace these days in the rather vast Bridge Kitchenware: The store stocks an impressive 20,000 items that range from the unusual (where else would you find an octagonal adjustable grill?) to the common (your average round cookie cutters). "Other places are more geared into consumer-oriented cookware from the United States, but we swear by the heaviness of the European brands," says Steven Bridge. "They won't buckle under the heat, and they last forever." Bridge keeps his store well equipped with products by Mauviel, Sitram, Paderno, and Apilco, heavy hitters that keep some of the city's top chefs—from Michael Romano of Union Square Cafe to Alfred Portale of Gotham Bar and Grill—coming back to browse.

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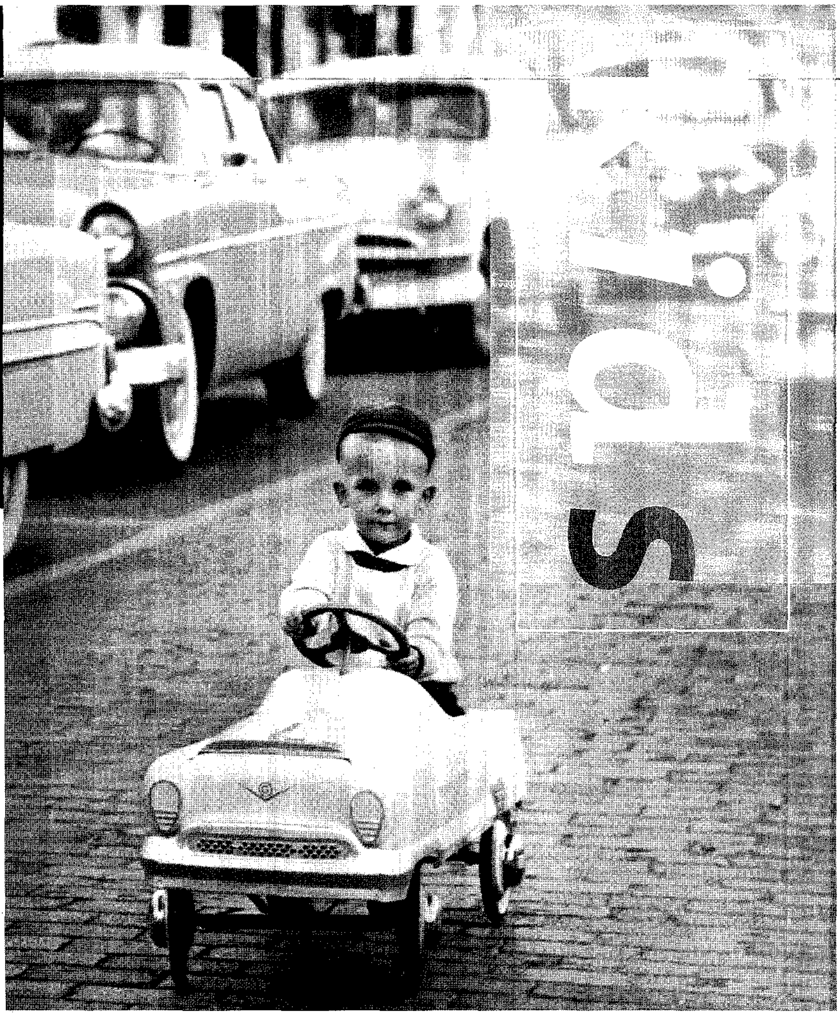

FPG

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BOOKSTORE

THE BANK STREET BOOKSTORE
610 WEST 112TH STREET; 678-1654

"I'm proud of the number of books we carry that aren't big sellers, that don't jump off the shelves, but are terrific books people just ought to know about," says Beth Puffer, manager of the Bank Street Bookstore (affiliated with the Bank Street College of Education; neither one, obviously, is anywhere near Bank Street). In an era of self-service bookstores, Bank Street is an oasis—a place where you can discuss with a knowledgeable seller what might come next for a child who devoured *The Stinky Cheese Man,* or find every single book Margaret Wise Brown ever wrote. The store also stocks an extensive selection of child-care books.

INTERACTIVE EXHIBITS

LIBERTY SCIENCE CENTER
LIBERTY STATE PARK; 201-200-1000

Forget, for a minute, about science—the Liberty Science Center is a truly excellent playground. Whether it's the 100-foot Touch Tunnel, where kids rely on every sense but sight to travel through a maze; permanent expositions like "E-Quest: Exploring Earth's Energy"; or the constant rotation of interactive exhibits, play and learning are indistinguishable. A 5,000-square-foot exhibit on microbes that explores the history of infectious diseases forgoes posterboard diagrams for a virtual-reality game, "Virtual Invaders," in which players combat viruses with white blood cells. For the younger clientele, "The World of Peter Rabbit" offers a 3-D showcase where children learn about perspective as they stand Alice in Wonderland–like next to Mr. McGregor's six-foot carrot.

PLAYGROUND

ROBERT BENDHEIM CENTRAL PARK
NEAR FIFTH AVENUE AND 100TH STREET

Robert Bendheim, which opened last June, is the first playground in the park designed with the needs of handicapped kids in mind. This doesn't mean it's only for those in wheelchairs. "We have expanded the sensory elements wherever we could," explains designer Patricia McCobb. There's a talk phone for whispering to your friend across the playground, shell shapes pressed into the concrete, and a jiggly hanging balance beam. A gigantic red metal spiral, like a magnified spring—big enough for a kid in a wheelchair to whiz through—sprays water in all directions in the summertime. "I just love to run through it," says 8-year-old Delilah, "but then, you know, I get all wet and the sand sticks to me. Yuck."

NANNY SERVICE

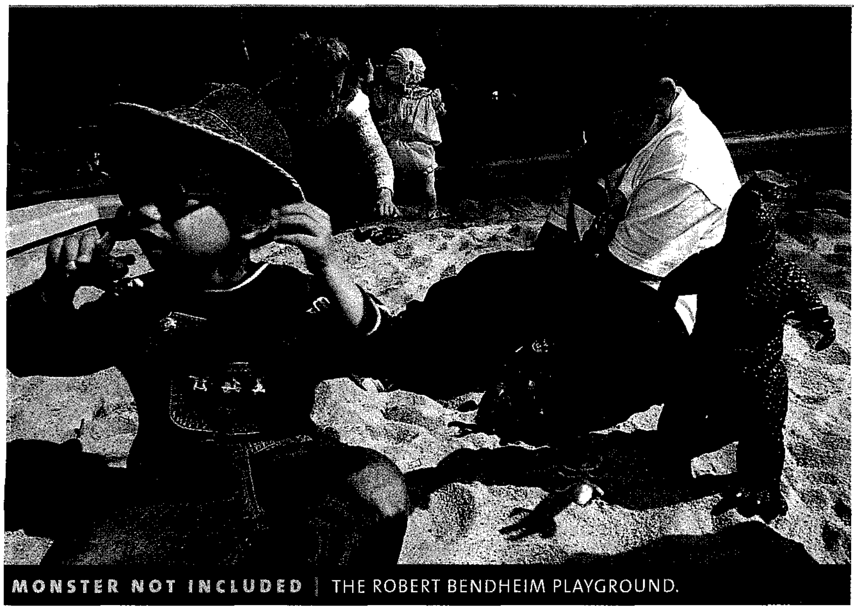
THE PAVILLION AGENCY, INC.
15 EAST 40TH STREET; 889-6609

Finding the right nanny is an art of extreme delicacy—this person is going to be a member of your family, after all. The people at Pavillion understand this. Cliff Greenhouse, one of the two brothers who run the midtown agency, sees his job as "making marriages." The Pavillion process, therefore, involves interviewing both sides. "A household where Mom doesn't work and there is a staff will have a very different set of needs and style," says Greenhouse, "from one where both parents work long hours outside the home."

BABY-PROOFER

CHILD PROOFERS 366-5132

For new parents operating on a fraction of the sleep scientists say humans require, it's difficult to foresee precautionary measures necessary to keep a child healthy and safe (and household goods relatively intact). That's where Frank Wright comes in. A former banker, Wright now makes house calls, securing the menacing expanses you once called the kitchen, the living room, and the bathroom. Says Wright, with a copywriter's flair: "When they start to crawl, it's time to call." Consultations include free home evaluation



MONSTER NOT INCLUDED | THE ROBERT BENDHEIM PLAYGROUND.

and written estimate; some jobs can be completed in a day. The work usually costs about $150 to $300.

SWIM CLASS

ASPHALT GREEN
555 EAST 90TH STREET; 369-8890

A lot has changed since the days when kids learned to swim by being chucked, however lovingly, into the water and told to paddle. Asphalt Green, the giant new sports facility on the Upper East Side, leads the way to a more progressive approach. Both of Asphalt Green's pools (one of them is the only public Olympic-size pool in the city) are equipped with hydraulic lifts that alter the depth of the pool to accommodate the size and ability of the age group. The instructors use songs and games to make students feel comfortable in the water, so swimming comes almost naturally. Summer registration begins June 18.

COLLEGE COUNSELOR

FRANK C. LEANA, HOWARD GREENE & ASSOCIATES 737-8866

College counselors from such elite schools as Dalton, Horace Mann, and Chapin, while disagreeing as to the effectiveness of independent counselors, agree that Leana is one of the best. He's been in the business for 23 years, 10 of which he spent as director of college counseling at Trinity. His services cost as much as those of a good lawyer ($450 for a 90-minute session or $3,000 for start-to-finish counseling), but his clients receive personal attention every step of the way. Students come to him as early as ninth grade, in order to plan their academic and extracurricular activities. In addition, he understands the anxiety this rite of passage can create. "So many parts of it are scary and are about numbers," he says, "you want to be very open about the process."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 147

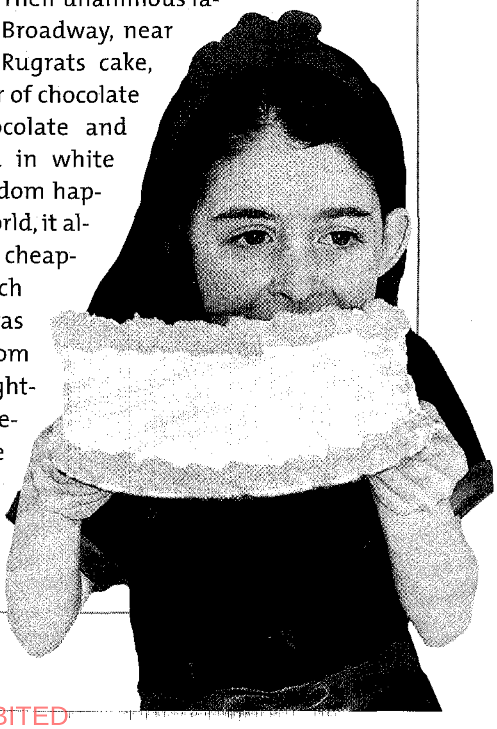
A BIRTHDAY BAKE-OFF

For Cake's Sake

"It's like ten birthday parties," said one 6-year-old of the array of elaborate confections we had assembled to test the theory that the best way to pick the best kid's birthday cake was to let the children do the tasting. So five youngsters (ages 5 to 8) were set to work ogling and sampling ten cakes from establishments as diverse as Carvel, Sant Ambroeus, and Margaret Braun (the guru of wedding cakes). Price tags ranged from bargain ($19.95) to outrageous ($500).

Not surprisingly, our diminutive testers' picks of the best-looking cakes were those decorated with their favorite characters: Creative Cakes, with life-size marzipan Beanie Babies, and Sant Ambroeus, with its 3-D chocolate Pooh Bear and Tigger among sponge-cake trees.

But when it came to the best-tasting cake, there was no shortage of surprises. The kids were articulate and very opinionated—little chefs in training. One awesome-looking creation was judged too dry, another moist but "like eating air." Yet another offering was judged to be "plastic-tasting," and though they liked a fourth cake, they hated its peanut-buttery icing. Their unanimous favorite? The TCBY (2052 Broadway, near 70th Street; 787-8229) Rugrats cake, which was simply a layer of chocolate cake topped with chocolate and vanilla yogurt, covered in white "better" frosting. (As seldom happens in the grown-up world, it also turned out to be the cheapest, $19.95 for a nine-inch round.) The runner-up was an ice-cream cake from Carvel ($23.95 for an eight-inch round, including delivery). So for kids, taste wins out. They'll learn about money and status soon enough.



otographs: top, Evan Kafka; bottom, R. Jerome Ferraro.

SUNDAY
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Orchestra

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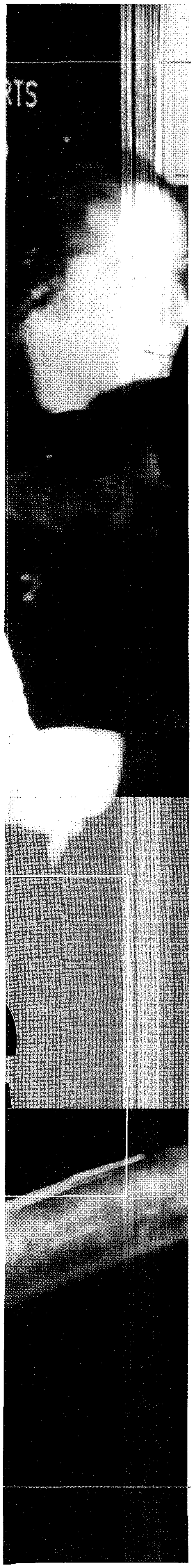


FPG

PAINT LIKE CÉZANNE, DISCOVER MUSICAL GREATNESS IN THE SUBWAY, OR LOUNGE GLAMOROUSLY AROUND LIKE MICHAEL CAINE.

ART CLASS

NEW YORK STUDIO SCHOOL 8 WEST 8TH STREET; 673-6466

"At the School of Visual Arts, they make things out of Styrofoam," says one loyal Studio School alum, "and at the New York Academy, they sit in anatomy class." The Studio School takes a centrist approach, guided by a doctrine of "working from seeing"—students take life-drawing and painting classes, offered both in the evenings and on weekends and as part of a full-time, three-year program. "The gods around here are de Kooning, Matisse, Cézanne, Giacometti," says Ro Lohin, a drawing teacher and program coordinator. The building housed the original Whitney Museum of American Art before the Studio School was founded here in 1964 by painter Mercedes Matter (who still teaches) and her students. These days, the most anticipated event on the calendar is the drawing marathon, "an orgy of art-making," says painter Alexi Worth. (Evening and weekend classes: open registration, $375 for thirteen weeks. Drawing marathon begins June 15; next series begins June 29. Full-time enrollment and drawing marathon by application only: full-time tuition, $3,750 per semester, $2,700 for the summer session. Marathon, $900 for two weeks, $525 for one week. Applications for summer due first week in May; for fall 1998, due first week in July.)

DANCE CLASS

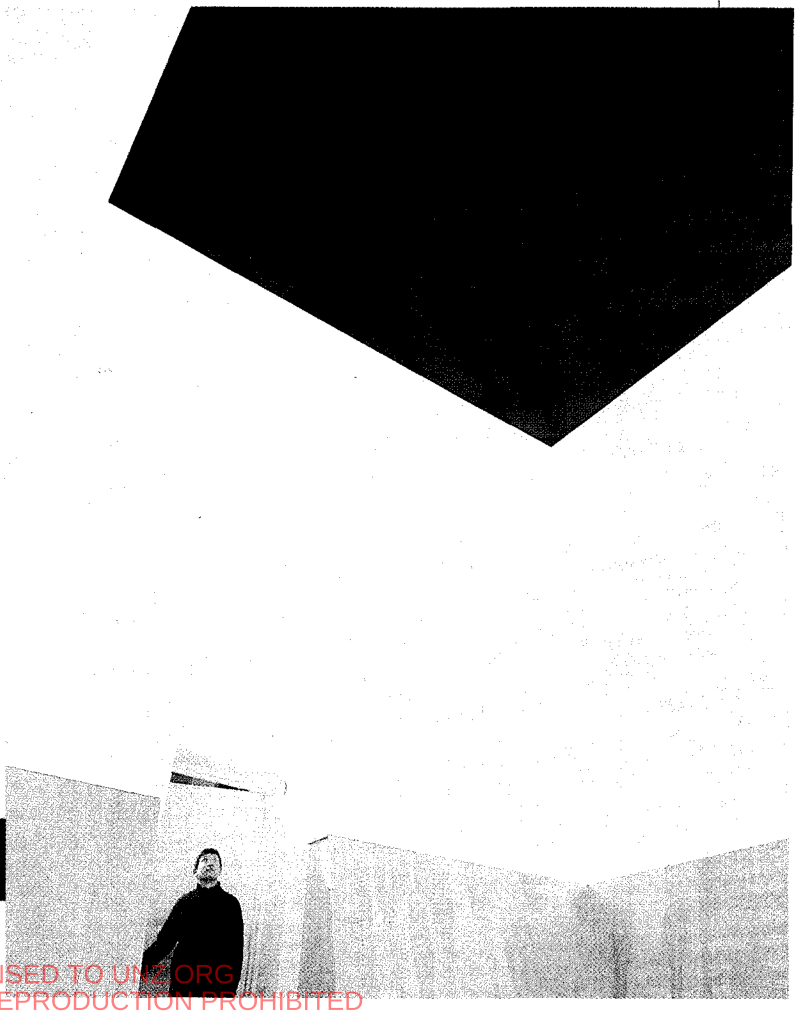
ABIZAID ARTS 107 GRAND STREET; 941-8480

The conga drummer at dance teacher Pat Hall's Saturday-afternoon class, coupled with the incense she burns to spiritually purify the studio, hints at Port-au-Prince during Carnaval. Hall, a professional choreographer who teaches in NYU's drama department, heightens the effect by demonstrating moves culled from African, Haitian, Brazilian, and European traditions with contortionist aplomb. Then comes the moment of truth, as groups of four students shimmy down the studio, egged on by their classmates, trying to re-create the moves Hall has shown them. Some students, of course, are better than others, but—as with many activities involving pelvic gyration—everyone has a good time.

HIDDEN ART GEM

P.S. 1 22-25 JACKSON AVENUE, LONG ISLAND CITY; 718-784-2084

It may be a bit improbable that New York's best secret art space can be found in Long Island City—not unlike discovering, say, a couple of fine paintings hanging in a boiler room. But if you take the subway out to P.S. 1, the public school turned Kunsthalle that reopened last October after an $8.5 million renovation, you'll find James Turrell's astonishing installation *Meeting,* a bare room lined with benches, with a sloping ceiling that draws your eye up to a large open skylight that perfectly frames a patch of sky. Ut-



UP ART | *MEETING,* P.S. 1'S SKY SCULPTURE.

Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

terly quiet, absolutely austere, this could be the only place in the city where you can feel completely on your own. The room is particularly sublime at sunset (to this end, it's open only Wednesday to Sunday, noon to 6 P.M.), when the changing colors of the sky transform it into a swirling impressionistic canvas. And when the sky goes dark, you can always go back through the museum's labyrinthine rooms of contemporary art—and find some paintings (two lovely Robert Rymans) hanging in the boiler room.

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ACTING WILD | IN E.R.S., AVANT-GARDE THEATER LIVES.

CABARET

FLICK6IX SPY, 101 GREENE STREET; 343-9000

If you dig the occasional small-room torch song but cringe at Broadway wannabes plodding through show tunes, Spy's Sunday-night Flick6ix is the shindig for you. For their soirée—equal parts decadent burlesque revue and kitschy Hollywood nostalgia trip—hosts Penelope Tuesdae and Kelly Cole concoct a new theme each week. Last month, for instance, one offering was "Beware the Ides of Mike!," a wacky Michael Caine–a–thon at which revelers sipped martinis and dug *Deathtrap* and *Alfie*—then lounged the night away to mod sounds Alfie would approve of. (Films are on Sundays at 9 P.M.; cabaret is at 11.)

EXPERIMENTAL THEATER TROUPE

ELEVATOR REPAIR SERVICE P.S. 122; 150 FIRST AVENUE; 477-5829

"E.R.S. is the *shit*!" exclaims Mark Russell, artistic director of Performance Space 122, which the seven-year-old theater troupe calls home. "Among the renaissance of experimental companies happening today, they are the most adventurous, taking their influences from Richard Foreman and the Wooster Group and making their own voice from that history." Indeed, by day, E.R.S. co-director John Collins, 28, works as a sound designer for the Wooster Group. "More than any particular aesthetic," says Collins, "I learned from them about the freedom I can have working on plays." The fifteen-member troupe is presenting an as-yet-untitled work-in-progress based on vaudeville and various documentaries May 7 through 10. On its heels, May 14 through 17, comes a return engagement of *Cab Legs,* an experiment with traditional narrative that moves between intimate scenes of whispered dialogue and dance numbers based on Indian cinema and old Cab Calloway cartoons. "We want our audiences to laugh," says Steve Bodow, 31, Collins's partner in performance crime, "but not always to be sure why they're laughing." (Works-in-progress start at 7:30 nightly; tickets are $12. *Cab Legs* is at 10:30 nightly, and Saturday and Sunday afternoons at 4; tickets are $20.)

PHOTO AUCTION

PHILLIPS AUCTIONEERS 406 EAST 79TH STREET; 570-4830

Painting has died a thousand deaths, and in the nineties, photography has emerged as the dominant, soul-enhancing, investment-quality wall decoration. Phillips, perhaps the city's least intimidating auction house, is the place to acquire it. The house deals in photographs ranging from Ansel Adams landscapes to Joel-Peter Witkin nightmares. A recent auction of vintage thirties French photos by Man Ray, Florence Henri, and other luminaries had industry dealers, big-time collectors, and awestruck shutterbugs waving their paddles wildly and spending more on a single snazzy snapshot than the total operating budget of certain Third World countries. Bargains can be found, however, and auction novices are entirely welcome.

BEST SUBWAY MUSICIAN

KATHLEEN MOCK

Last fall, Las Vegas's New York–New York hotel and casino waylaid some of the real city's best underground talent—gritty soul man Roger Ridley, loopy percussionist Tony Pots and Pans, and about a dozen others—and shipped it off to the desert for a long-running revue on the strip. Fortunately for commuters, though, one of the subway system's finest singers, Kathleen Mock, resisted the casino's siren call. The Alabama native's crystal-clear alto and no-nonsense guitar playing—think Joni Mitchell's pop moments—continue to resonate through the halls of West Side IRT stations, Grand Central, and Times Square. That's the sound of the woman working on the train, gang.

CAMERA RENTAL

HAND HELD FILMS 118 WEST 22ND STREET; 691-4898

If you aspire to being the next indie sensation, first you'll need a camera. Hand Held Films is a favorite among filmmakers who have the cash or live on credit; the 7,500-square-foot Chelsea loft has 35-, 16-, and Super 16-mm. motion-picture cameras as well as an editing room and sound, lighting, and video equipment. Started in 1986 by Parisian Marc Paturet, Hand Held

Photographs by Jason Schn

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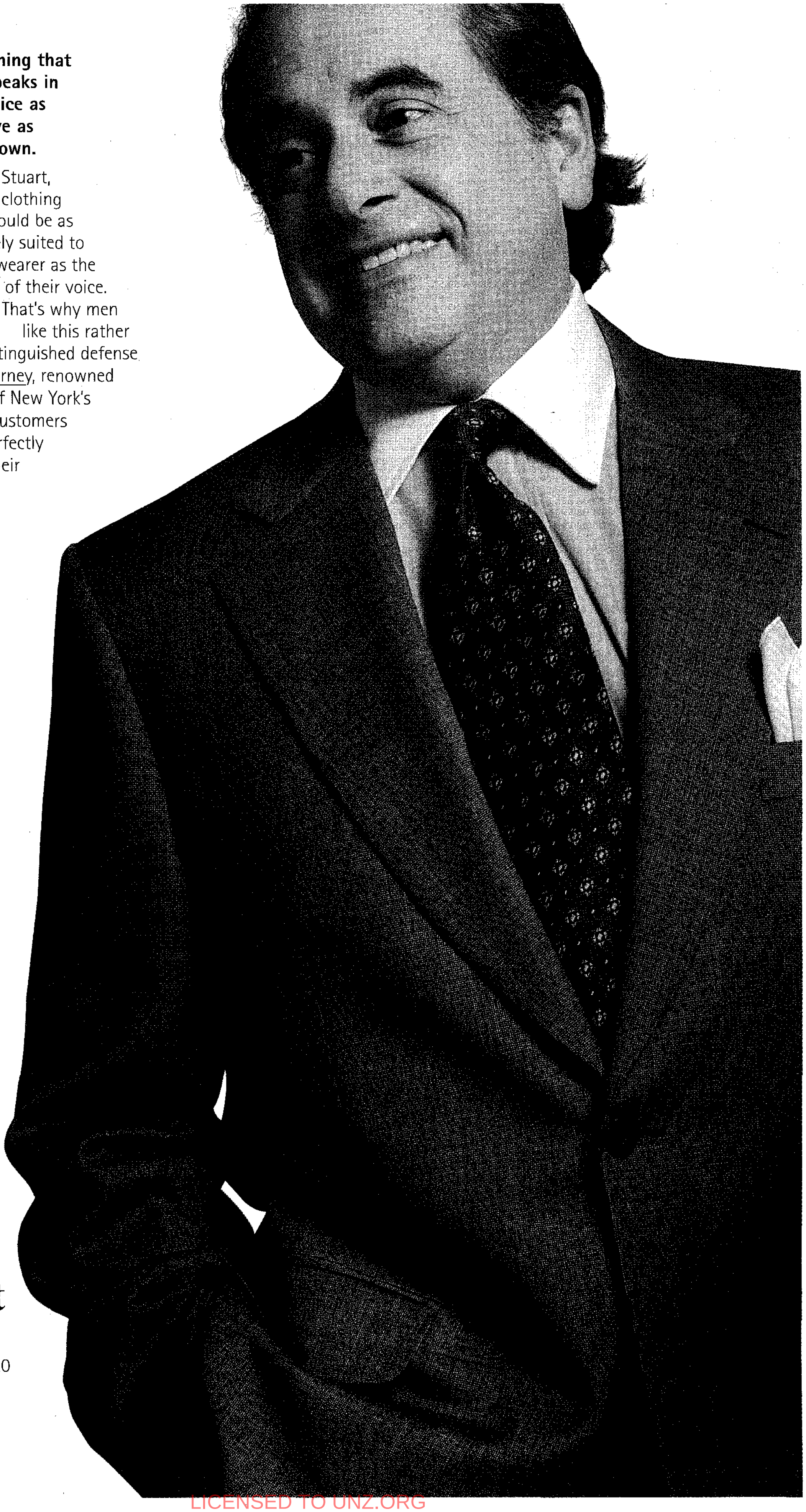

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has supplied gear for such films as *Truth or Dare, I Shot Andy Warhol,* and *The Myth of Fingerprints.* But even life in indie-land isn't cheap. A four-week shoot with a 35-mm. camera can run $12,000 to $18,000, and an editing room goes for $800 to $1,500 a week.

GAY GOSPEL CHOIR

LAVENDER LIGHT 714-7072

The fact that Lavender Light is, to our knowledge, the *only* gay gospel choir does not detract from its excellence. In existence since 1985, the group, composed of 50 men and women, works to keep gospel-music tradition alive in what it calls "an environment supportive to gay and lesbian people." Lavender Light is generally excluded from mainstream gospel conventions and competitions, though it performs regularly at locations such as Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, and City Hall. Adding a contemporary edge to old gospel songs, the chorus has raised eyebrows by occasionally referring to God in lyrics as "She." This May, Lavender Light presents "Blessed (A Concert of Praise & Thanksgiving)" at the Pace Downtown Theater, and on June 22, it will perform at Carnegie Hall with the New York City Gay Men's Chorus.

GALLERY PIT STOP

THE COFFEE BAR AT DIA CENTER FOR THE ARTS 548 WEST 22ND STREET; 989-5566

For a slice of cutting-edge art to go with your cup of coffee, take a break from touring the galleries in West Chelsea and swing up to the roof of the Dia Center for the Arts. The reflective surfaces of artist Dan Graham's *Rooftop Urban Park Project*—a glass installation that takes up much of the roof—compete with expansive views of the Hudson, Chelsea's old brick warehouses, and a surreal vista of the immense screened-in driving range at Chelsea Piers. When you tire of the outdoor scenery, the bar itself, built from a rooftop utility shed, features a video screen with a rotating program of films by the likes of Joseph Beuys and Nam June Paik.

DRUM-MAKER

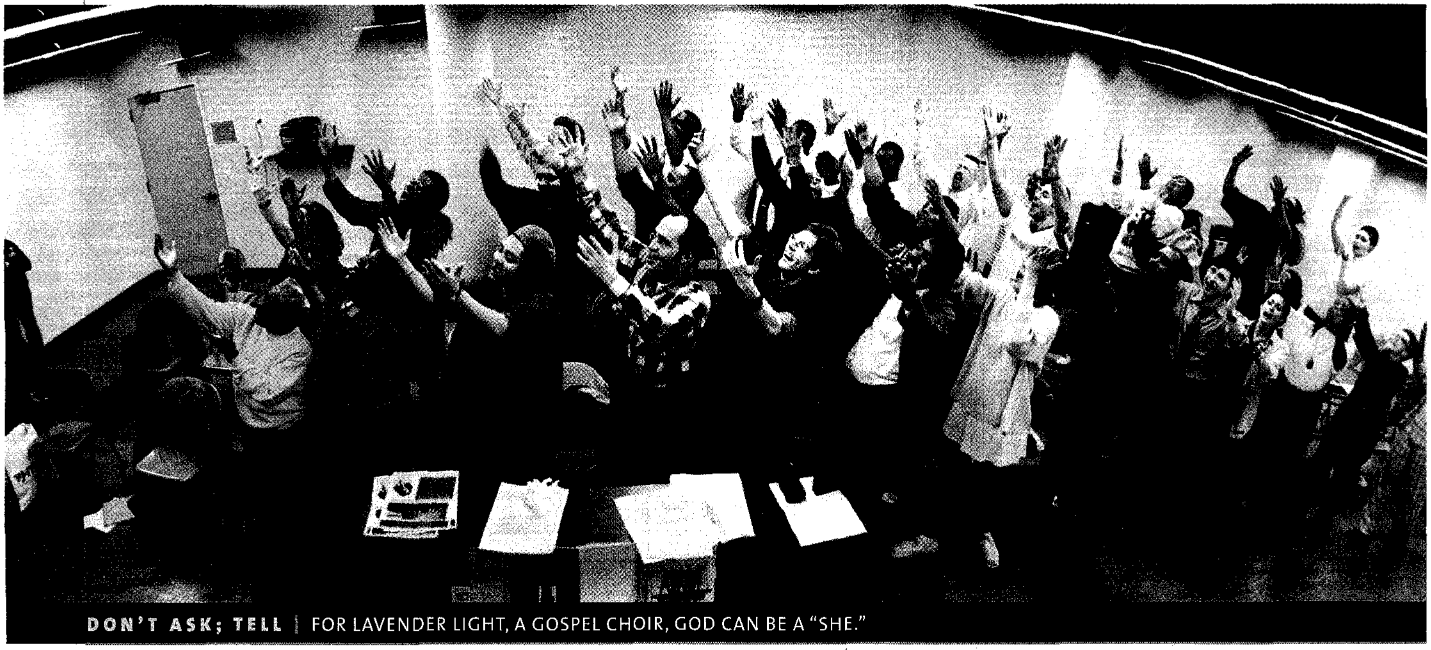
J.C.R. PERCUSSION 948 OGDEN AVENUE, THE BRONX; 718-293-6589

At first blush, building drums in a South Bronx basement workshop for 35 years might not seem like the best way to gain perspective on late-twentieth-century geopolitics. But as the manufacturer of the world's most sought-after Latin and African percussion instruments, Caly Rivera has learned more than you might expect. "Cuba is where all the idea for all this comes from," says the Puerto Rican–born 58-year-old, gesturing to a roomful of half-finished congas, maracas, and more exotic-looking instruments. "But now Cuban musicians don't have anything. They don't have drum skins; they don't have bells; and they don't have money to buy them here, either. It's sad." Residents of free countries, on the other hand, can pick up J.C.R.'s unique creations at music shops on 48th Street in Manhattan or—as Tito Puente, Celia Cruz, and conga-dabbling actor Andy Garcia have—visit Rivera's mom-and-pop atelier and place a custom order. Rivera puts more effort into his craft than he necessarily needs to (carving his bongos, for instance, out of solid blocks of mahogany), and he points out that his handmade creations are rife with superficial imperfections—something he takes as a point of pride. "It's not the beauty that counts," he notes wisely. "It has to sound beautiful."

HISTORIC HOUSE

MORRIS-JUMEL MANSION 65 JUMEL TERRACE, AT 160TH STREET; 923-8008

If you think purchasing Manhattan property back in the seventies was a good thing you missed out on, consider the 1700s. We're talking pristine views of downtown, New Jersey, and Westchester. We're talking a two-story portico, classical columns, a triangular pediment, and enough room to comfortably accommodate an occupying army's headquarters. Just take a look at the Morris-Jumel Mansion, the oldest surviving residence in Manhattan, according to the Historic House Trust of New York City. Built sometime around 1765, the Palladian domicile served initially as British colonel Roger Mor-



DON'T ASK; TELL | FOR LAVENDER LIGHT, A GOSPEL CHOIR, GOD CAN BE A "SHE."

Photograph by Danny Clin

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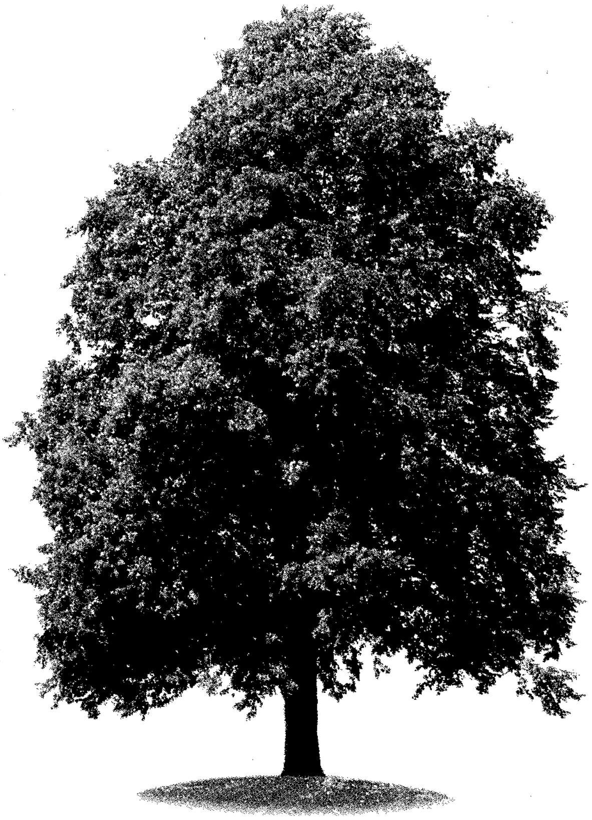

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ris's summer retreat. And retreat is exactly what Colonel Morris did—back to England—when the Revolutionary War broke out. As the second-highest point of land on the island, Mount Morris qualified as a military must-have. So after Morris split, George Washington occupied the dwelling for six weeks, until he also was forced to retreat. (Wednesday through Sunday, 10 A.M.–4 P.M.; group tours by appointment. Admission is $3 for adults, $2 for students and seniors; children under 12 are admitted free.)

NEW YORK DOCUMENTARY

ARGUING THE WORLD

Full of evocative footage of the city from the thirties and forties, *Arguing the World,* Joseph Dorman's recent film, captures famous New Yorkers in their most characteristic act—talking. Daniel Bell, Irving Kristol, Nathan Glazer, and the late Irving Howe all describe their political and personal passions with the kind of rapid-fire precision characteristic of the New York intellectual. As a socially compact entity centered on the *Partisan Review,* this group has all but disappeared, leaving behind a torrent of articles, books, and memoirs that at the very least consolidated the achievements of modernism. Dorman's movie focuses on these writers' early Marxism and subsequent movement to the right. Literary critic Irving Howe became a socialist with a strong commitment to liberal values; sociologist Glazer, a neoconservative; Bell, a neocon, too, and then, moving back, a liberal; and Kristol, a thoroughgoing conservative and guru to the Reaganites. In whatever guises, they kept on talking. The film can be special-ordered from First Run Features (800-229-8575) and will be released on video later this year.

LECTURE SERIES

THE PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAM THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY, FIFTH AVENUE AT 42ND STREET; 930-0855

In Emerson's day, lectures were impassioned, sonorous, scholarly affairs for which people might undertake a daylong journey. Today, they are merely the prerequisite for—never the point of—an evening in the company of a current or past celebrity. Except, that is, at the Public Library, where the setting is grand, the lectures are burnished, the lecturers are distinguished, and the audience is fully adult (or con-

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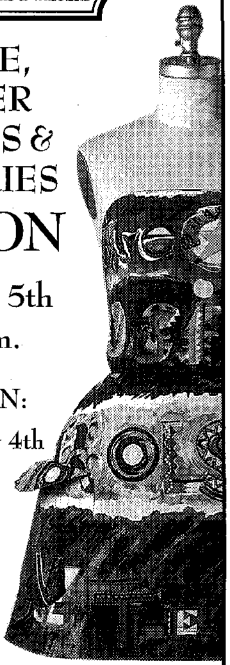

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vincingly pretends to be). There is a strong ceremonial flavor to these evenings, as if memorable things are being uttered. Well, why not? The lectures—*addresses*, really—are such that they can be swiftly and painlessly transformed into books: Robert Hughes's *Culture of Complaint* is only the most celebrated example of a tome that had its genesis in a series of remarks at Fifth and 42nd.

MUSEUM GUIDE

TERRI WOLFE-HIRSCH THE WHITNEY MUSEUM; 945 MADISON AVENUE, AT 75TH STREET; 570-3676

When Terri Wolfe-Hirsch entered the Whitney's docent-training program in 1985 after quitting a job of many years as a New York City high-school teacher, she "didn't even know what a docent was," she says. Thirteen years later, Wolfe is the Whitney's most unflappable guide, a docent who can speak intelligently about Arthur Dove or Keith Haring and sees her mission as "not to talk about what I like or appreciate but to share what I think the artist is doing and to make sure the viewer understands the seriousness of the artist's intent." There have been moments, however, when even Wolfe-Hirsch has almost been stymied. Like the time she introduced her groups to Nancy Rubins's *Mattresses and Cakes*, an enormous hanging sculpture of mattresses smeared with Entenmann's cakes on view in the 1995 Whitney Biennial. "I had to convince people that this was a metaphor for the life cycle," Wolfe-Hirsch says. "That it was about birthdays and anniversaries, but also about loss. To transform ten tons of mattresses and 300 cakes into a giant floating cloud."

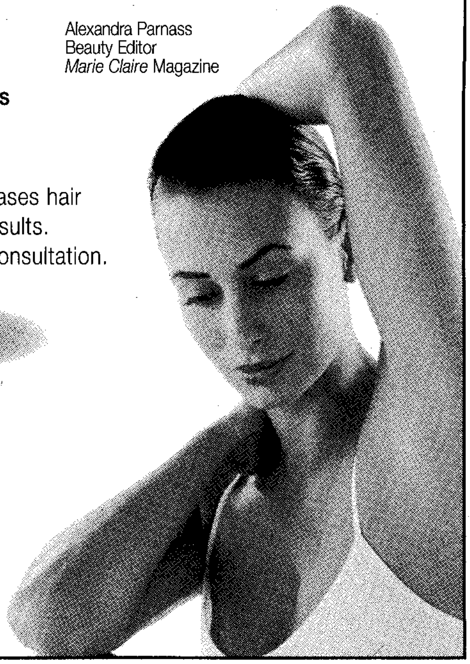
PUBLIC-ACCESS TV SHOW

MEDIA FUNHOUSE SATURDAYS AT 1:30 A.M. ON CHANNEL 16; MONDAYS AT 1:30 A.M. ON CHANNEL 57

Admittedly, it's hard for a show to stand out when it's faced with such scintillating competition as *Oral Health Matters*, *District 27 Presents*, *Luxury Resorts of the Berkshires*, and *The Urgent Message From Bayside*. But *Media Funhouse* is truly excellent television. The host, Ed Grant, is a walking, talking encyclopedia of film and video knowledge "from high art to low trash and back again," as he puts it. Grant discusses everything from Cassavetes to Hong Kong cine-

"Hello laser, goodbye razor."

Alexandra Parnass
Beauty Editor
Marie Claire Magazine



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ma to French New Wave, and conducts interviews with the likes of Roger Corman and Russ Meyer. Although Grant has a sense of humor ("It's not 'postmodern deconstructive Marxism in the postcolonial context,' " explains one fan), *Media Funhouse* doesn't smirk at everything the way *Mystery Science Theater 3000* does. "He has a reverence even for the trashy stuff," says the fan, "and he talks so fast that you get an hour show in a half-hour."

READING ROOM

THE NEW YORK SOCIETY LIBRARY 53 EAST 79TH STREET; 288-6900

The New York Society Library is the oldest library in New York City, dating from 1754, and still looks much as it did when Herman Melville checked out a book on whales. (He didn't return it for more than a year.) Contemporary writers such as David Halberstam and Wendy Wasserstein use the place for their research as well. But the heart of the library is the Members' Reading Room, which is the perfect place to settle down with a book. There's a fireplace, French windows, overstuffed chairs, and nineteenth-century oils hanging on mahogany-paneled walls. Never a laptop in sight. (Membership is $135 per year, with discounts for students and teachers.)

THEATER-TICKET SUBSCRIPTION

SILVER PASS THE DRAMA DEPT.; 541-8299

Only in the rarest cases does quality theater cost as little as a trip to the movies. The productions of the Drama Dept., that vital young company responsible for *June Moon* and *As Bees in Honey Drown,* almost always qualify, but only before they're picked up commercially (at which point they triple in ticket price) and only before they're reviewed in the *Times* (at which point they sell out). Hence, the appeal of the Silver Pass. For just $35, bearers are guaranteed tickets to the season's three shows, plus assorted works-in-progress. Thanks to active members like Nicky Silver, Hope Davis, and Mark Brokaw, high quality is almost always assured, and so too is eclecticism, because the troupe rotates among a new play, an old musical, and a neglected classic every year. The deal, as the heroine of *Bees* would say, is "fabulous—and I never use that word!"

Cue

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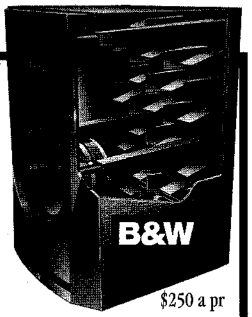

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ELEVEN O'CLOCK NEWS

WNBC CHANNEL 4

If you examined every field of human endeavor, from neurosurgery to bobby-pin production, and considered how well or poorly humankind performs each, you'd be hard-pressed to name many things our species does more wretchedly than produce an eleven-o'clock news program. But that's why it's so enjoyable to watch. How long have Chuck Scarborough and Sue Simmons been tallying up the daily body count together? The only perceptible change is the thickness of their pancake makeup. If a big local story is breaking, you want WCBS, because Marcia Kramer is sure to be ahead of the competition. And WABC has solid field reporters. But Chuck and Sue are a class act. Janice Hunt holds her own as a weatherperson, and Len Berman is the conscience of New York City sportscasters. A cameo or two from Gabe Pressman rounds out the whole delicious spectacle.

WALKING TOUR

BIG ONION WALKING TOURS 439-1090

"By 'big onion,' " explains Seth Kamil, who appropriated the nineteenth-century epithet for the Bowery to name his walking-tour operation, "we mean a peeling away of layers of the city's history." Since 1991, when Kamil, a doctoral candidate in American urban and ethnic history at Columbia, formed Big Onion to help pay for graduate school, it has expanded to encompass sixteen guides and 25 tours—from "Brooklyn Bridge and Brooklyn Heights at Twilight" to "Ellis Island" to "Historic Harlem" to "Before Stonewall," a gay-and-lesbian-focused tour of the Village—led year-round on weekends and holidays. A favorite, which is being offered on Sunday, May 10, in honor of Mother's Day, is the "Multi-Ethnic Eating Tour." "The tour is about 75 percent history, 25 percent food," Kamil says about this gastronomic crawl through the Lower East Side, which features samplings of Dominican plantains, dim sum, Lebanese halvah, and fresh mozzarella.

NEW YORK-BASED WEBSITE

DISINFORMATION WWW.DISINFO.COM

Since people worldwide look to New York as the leader of mainstream culture and media, it comes as no surprise that the city has also spawned a sub-

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culture of dissenters whose revolutionary manifestos aim to splash to the surface opinions and evidence that rarely float up to the mainstream media. Disinformation helps Webbies—and not just conspiracy theorists—surf deeper by acting as an alternative search engine for those looking for the most current and unadulterated information, whether the topic be international politics or UFO sightings. Indexed and ranked, the links for a specific issue are grouped in dossiers and organized within plainly labeled categories like "propaganda," "counterintelligence," and "censorship." The Smoking Gun (www.thesmokinggun.com) similarly arms the Little Man—here with juicy authentic documents that have been obtained from government sources via Freedom of Information Act requests.

OUTDOOR MUSEUM

THE PHUN PHACTORY 45-14 DAVIS STREET, LONG ISLAND CITY; 718-482-7486

Nestled somewhere below the No. 7 train amid the grim industrial sprawl of Long Island City, the Phun Phactory lures the jaded urban eye with lush bursts of color. A closer inspection reveals an organized outdoor gallery of uncommonly polished graffiti art, a stunning collection of spray-can murals that invites all who are curious to stop and marvel. Pat DiLillo, the founder of Phun Phactory Aerosol Art Corporation (and at other times a disabled plumber), started the whole thing with the aim of providing worthy artistic talents a legal outlet for their energies. He first acquired rent-free access to this active factory building's exterior walls in 1993, and his plan has been a success ever since. Interested aerosol artists (more than 800 have participated so far) must submit a portfolio of prior works along with a mock-up of their proposed design before being granted permission to spray their stuff. Works tend to be displayed for three months before being replaced. As a nonprofit association sponsored by companies including Amtrak and Perry Ellis America, the Phun Phactory also operates a number of community-service projects.

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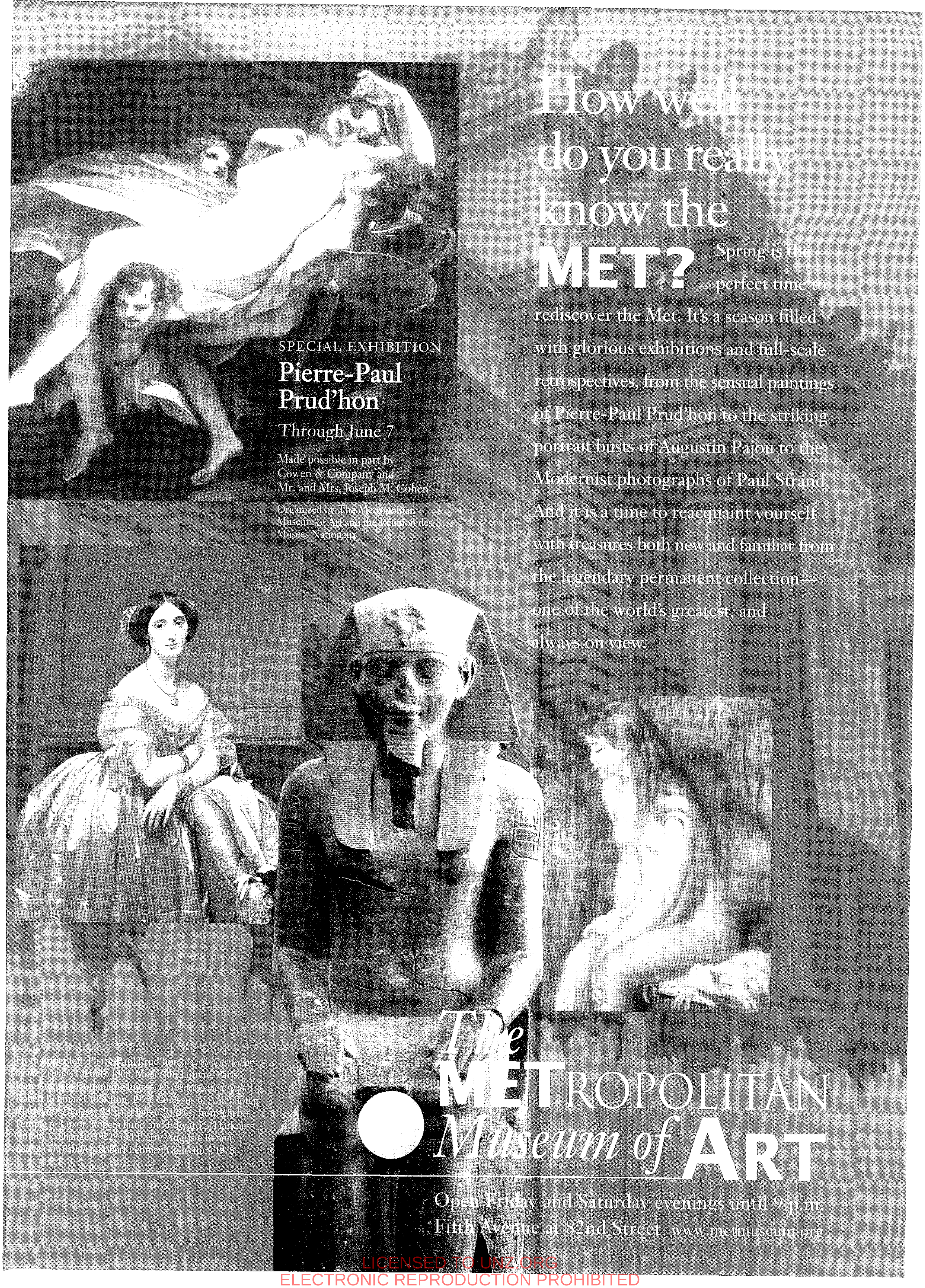

How well do you really know the MET?

Spring is the perfect time to rediscover the Met. It's a season filled with glorious exhibitions and full-scale retrospectives, from the sensual paintings of Pierre-Paul Prud'hon to the striking portrait busts of Augustin Pajou to the Modernist photographs of Paul Strand. And it is a time to reacquaint yourself with treasures both new and familiar from the legendary permanent collection—one of the world's greatest, and always on view.

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From upper left: Pierre-Paul Prud'hon, *Psyche Carried off by the Zephyrs* (detail), 1808, Musée du Louvre, Paris; Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *La Princesse de Broglie*, Robert Lehman Collection, 1975; Colossus of Amenhotep III (detail), Dynasty 18, ca. 1390–1353 B.C., from Thebes, Temple of Luxor, Rogers Fund and Edward S. Harkness Gift, by exchange, 1922; and Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *Young Girl Bathing*, Robert Lehman Collection, 1975.

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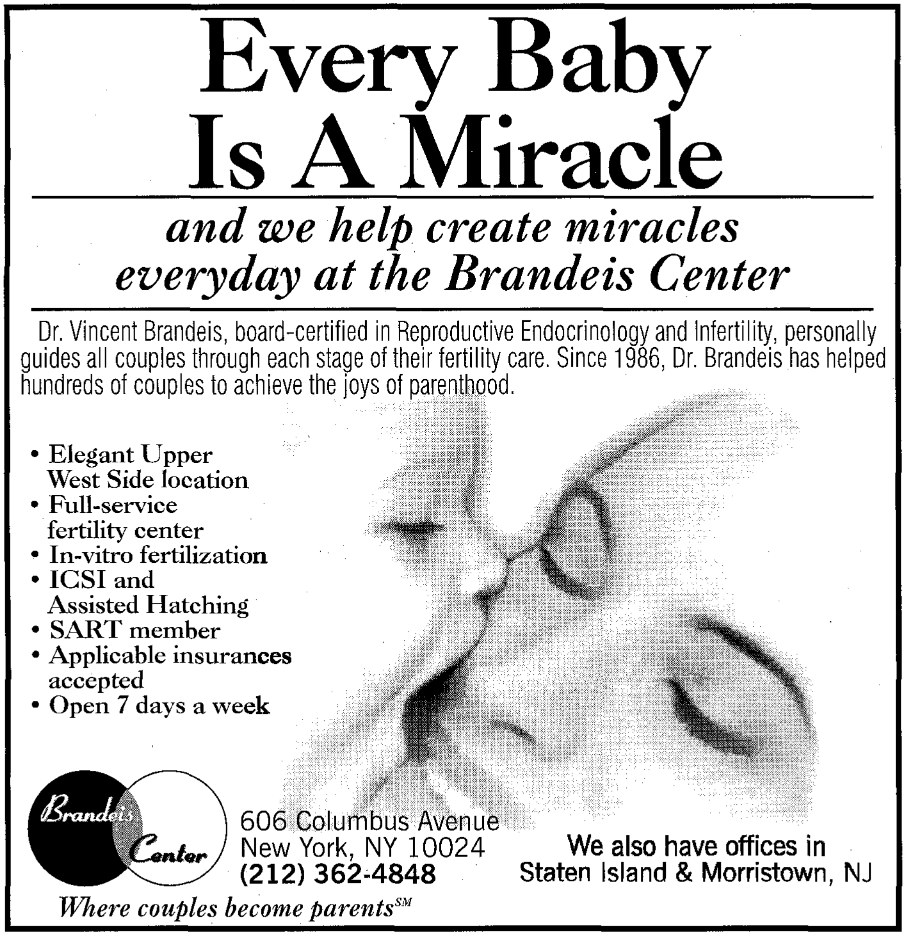
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NYM4/98 B

it filed a high-decibel free-speech lawsuit two weeks ago against the FCC for trying to shut its Lower East Side home base down. But we'll tune in instead to the radically chic, Williamsburg-based free103point9 (103.9 FM)—for its portentous, e. e. cummings–esque name, its emphasis on experimental "turntablists" (I-Sound and D.J. Scud), and its slippery ability to move around town with the ease of a boom box. The 40-watt station broadcasts on weekends from a loft that rattles when an unnamed subway passes. Operating on seven turntables, one microphone, two tape decks, two CD players, an 8-track-tape deck, a speakerphone, seven keyboards, two mixers, one drum kit, and one guitar, the guerrilla venture would surely make Beck proud. "We're trying to bring back the spirit of Orson Welles's radio theater," touts pirate regular D.J. Dizzy.

DO-IT-YOURSELF BLOCKBUSTER SHOW

NEW YORK'S EIGHT VERMEERS

New Amsterdam possesses more Vermeers than old Amsterdam—more, in fact, than any other place on earth, a whopping 23 percent of the world's minuscule supply. You can create your own Vermeer retrospective any day (except Mondays, when both museums are closed). The Metropolitan Museum of Art's *A Maid Asleep* provides a good introduction to Vermeer's painterly magic. It depicts a young woman in seemingly troubled sleep, an Oriental carpet rendered with hallucinogenic accuracy looming on the table in the foreground, and another room seen through an open door. The implied literal and figurative compartmentalization of life seems perfectly attuned to the contemporary New York psyche. Just down the hall from this painting are four more, including the famous *Young Woman With a Water Jug*, which was painted about five years later. When you've admired them all sufficiently, leave the building and stroll down Fifth Avenue. Along the way, think about Vermeer's eerily still interiors bathed in delicate light, and why they so captured the imagination of turn-of-the-century New York collectors. Arrive at the Frick Collection, whose three Vermeers depict people involved in ambiguous transactions. *Mistress and Maid*, the largest of the collection, is considered by many historians to be unfinished. It is a perfect place for you to finish your tour.

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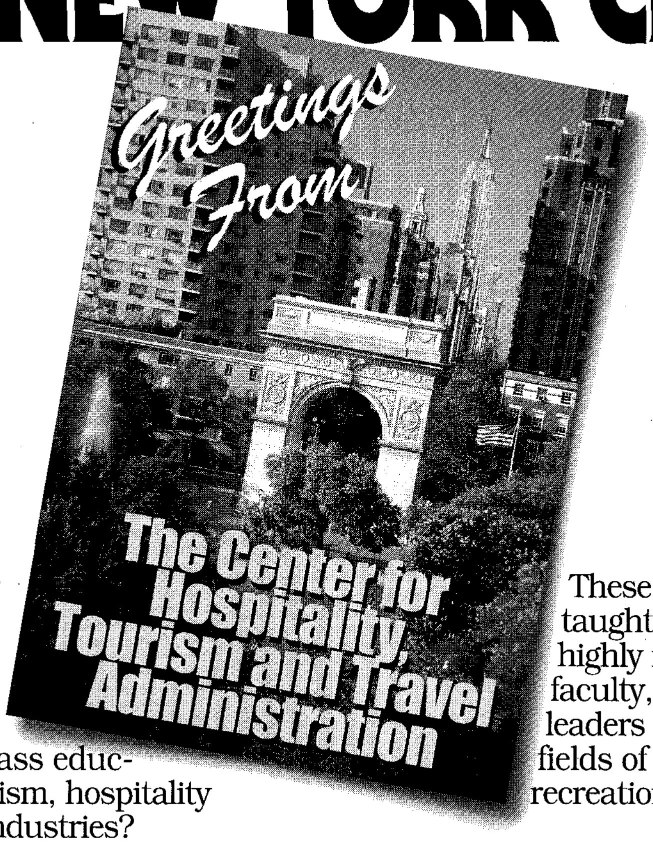
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MUSEUMS

Most major museums suspend their usual admission fees at some point during the week.

- **Whitney Museum of American Art** (945 Madison Avenue, at 75th Street; 570-3676) Thursday, 6–8 p.m.
- **Museum of Modern Art** (11 West 53rd Street; 708-9400) Friday, 4:30–8:30 p.m.
- **Guggenheim Museum Uptown** (1071 Fifth Avenue, at 89th Street; 423-3500) Friday, 6–8 p.m.
- **Guggenheim Museum SoHo** (575 Broadway; 423-3500) Saturday, 6–8 p.m.
- **American Museum of Natural History** (79th Street and Central Park West; 769-5000) Sunday–Thursday, 4:45–5:45 p.m., Friday and Saturday, 7:45–8:45 p.m.
- **Metropolitan Museum of Art** (Fifth Avenue and 82nd Street) Every day (it's closed Mondays) is "pay as you wish"—quite simply the best deal in the known universe.

CLASSICAL MUSIC

- **The Frick Collection** (1 East 70th Street; 288-0700) Write in advance for excellent free classical-music concerts. Call for information.
- **Library for the Performing Arts** (40 Lincoln Center Plaza, at 65th Street; 870-1630) Call for details about music, dance, film, theater, and lectures.
- **Avery Fisher Hall** (Lincoln Center; 875-5030) Occasionally has $10 student rush tickets to the New York Philharmonic on weeknights. Call at 10:30 a.m. on the day of the concert.
- **Carnegie Hall** (881 Seventh Avenue, at 57th Street; 247-7800) Has $8 student rush tickets but only for certain performances.
- **Alice Tully Hall** (875-5050) Sometimes has student and senior rush seats available. Call around 11:30 a.m. on the day of the show.

OPERA

- **Metropolitan Opera** (30 Lincoln Center Plaza; 362-6000) Standing-room tickets to the Met are available for $11 and $15. (You can often steal an unoccupied seat after you're inside, but you didn't read that here.)
- **New York State Theater** (Lincoln Center; 870-5570) Standing-room tickets to the New York City Opera are available for $8 (ballet tickets are $14) on the day of the performance.

THEATER

- **The Joseph Papp Public Theater** (425 Lafayette Street; 260-2400) Offers tickets for $15 cash if there are any left 30 minutes before show time. You must be present in person.

DANCE

- **Joyce Theater** (175 Eighth Avenue, at 19th Street; 242-0800) Offers standing-room tickets if all seats are sold. It is one of the few theaters that still have volunteer usher programs. Call 691-9740 after 8:30 a.m. and ask for Kathleen.

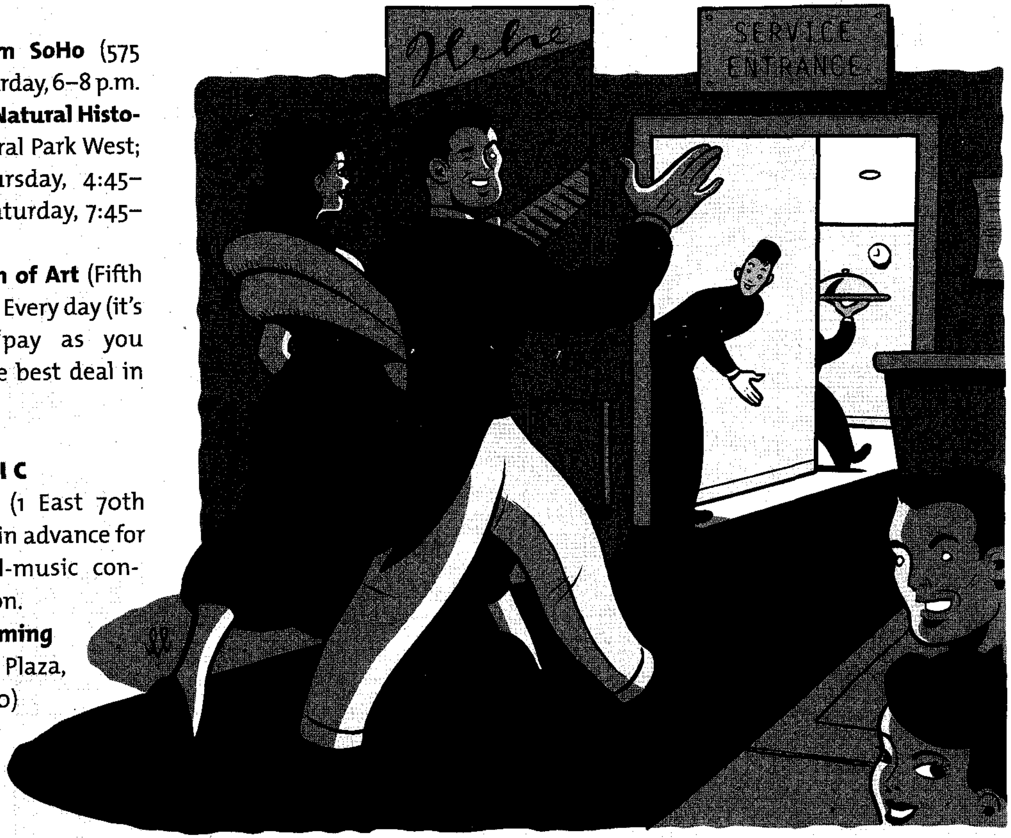
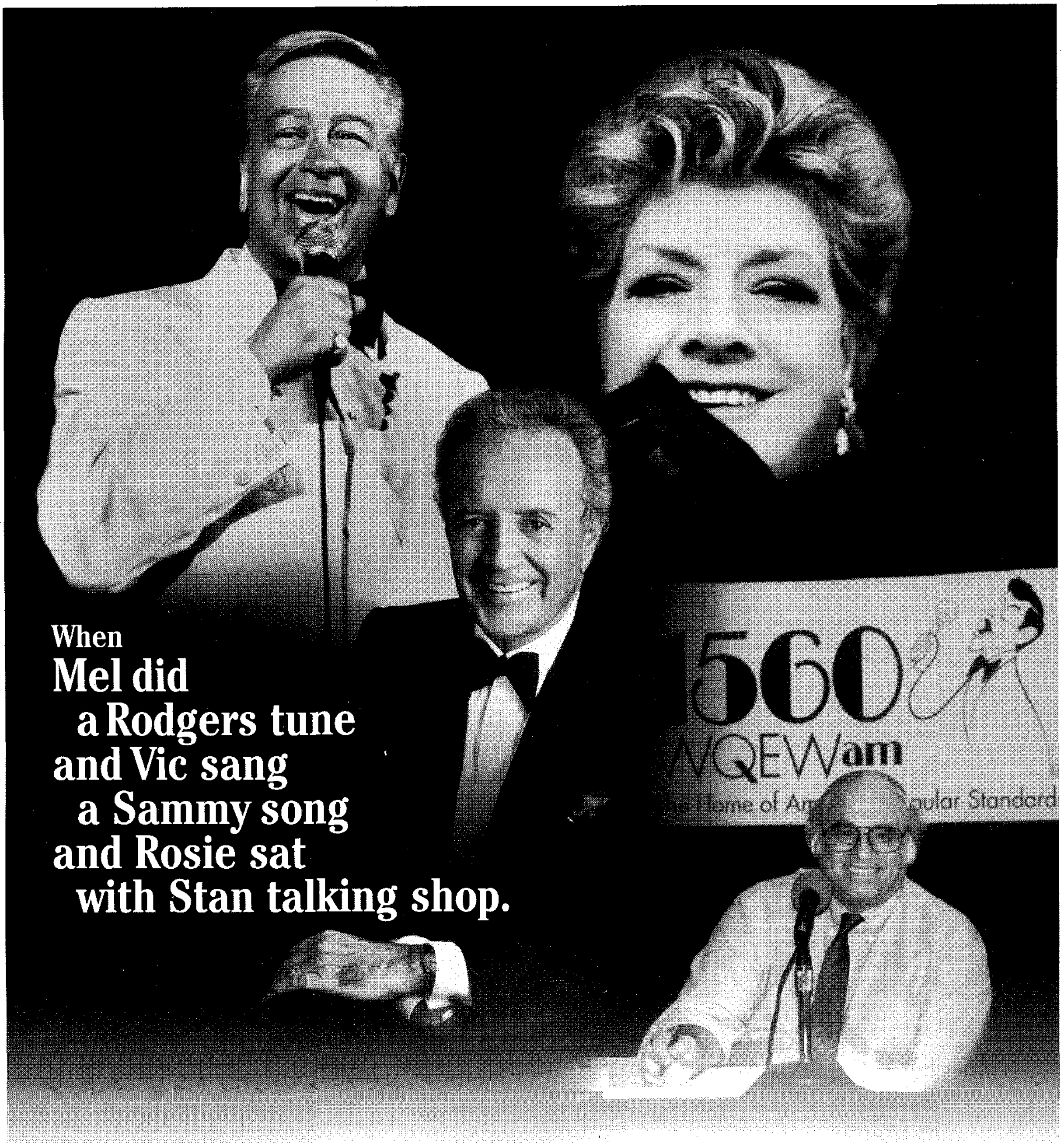


Illustration by Mark M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From **Joe Williams** to **Linda Eder** to **Willie Nelson** -- they've all played Stan's Cabaret -- which happens live every Monday from 3-7 on WQEW.

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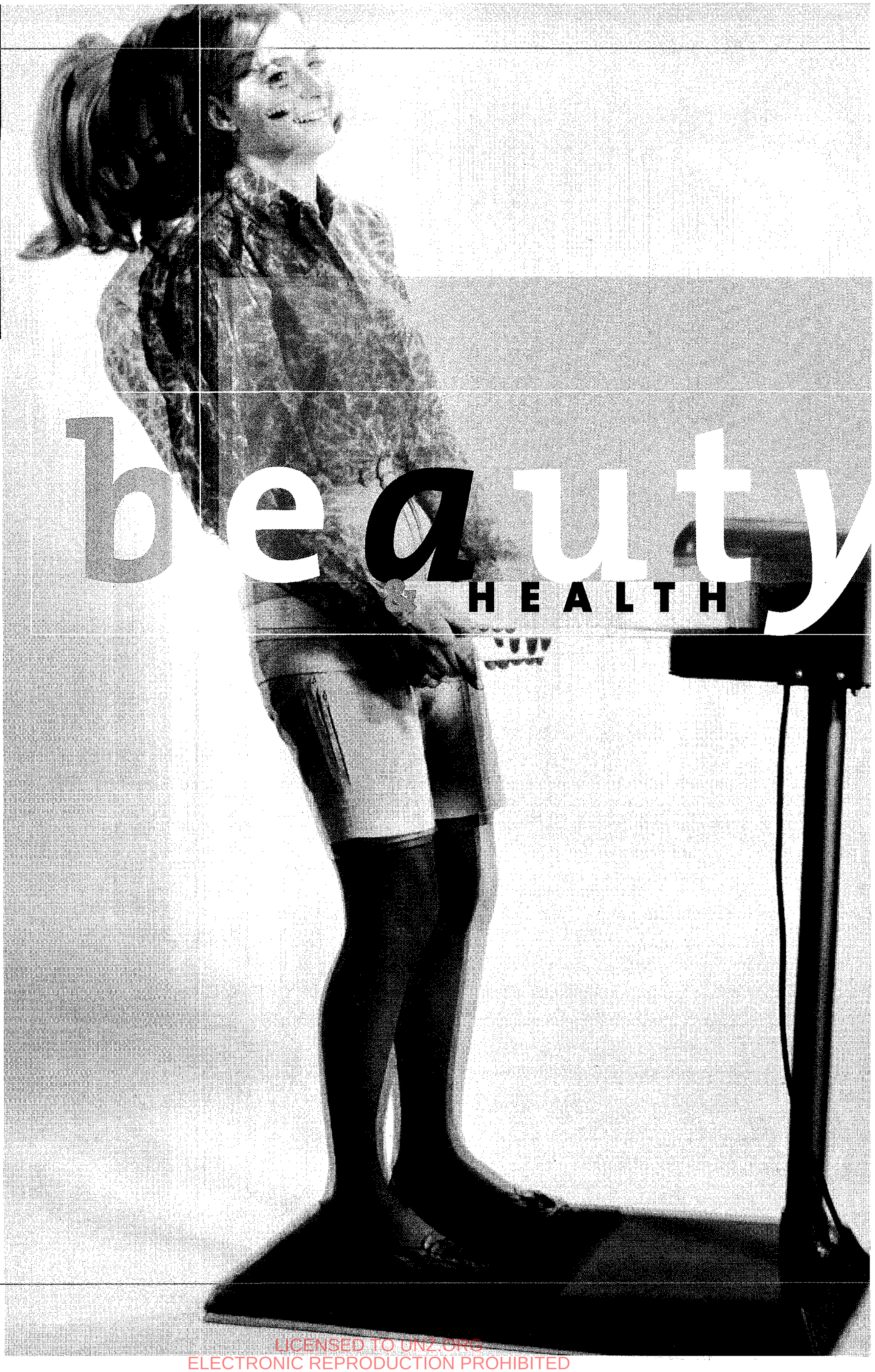

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BEAUTY HOUR

THE SPA AT EQUINOX
140 EAST 63RD STREET; 750-4671

A leisurely day at a salon, no matter how posh, isn't everyone's cup of tea, and even if you enjoy being pampered for hours, who has the time? Several salons and spas have started offering multi-tasking sessions that combine various treatments in a convenient and (relatively) economical one-hour slot. The deeply relaxing beauty hour at the Spa at Equinox starts with an exfoliating body massage with sea salt and essential oils. Then comes a thorough slathering with mud. While you soak it all in, wrapped in a heated blanket, you get a neck-shoulder-and-hand massage, and some soothing reflexology on your feet. All for just $130. At Lia Schorr (686 Lexington Avenue, at 56th Street; 486-9670), you can lie back and enjoy a basic facial while a manicurist and a pedicurist slip into the room and go to work on your extremities; as the final mask sets on your face, your lashes get dyed, too. The whole thing costs $120, about the price of a mere massage at some of the city's tonier spas.

SHAVE

JERRY'S MEN'S HAIR STYLING SALON
ROCKEFELLER CENTER; 246-3151

Here's a retro-chic indulgence that's a lot better for you than smoking Cohibas and far less annoying than swing dancing: a straight-razor shave at Jerry's ($11). The twenty-minute procedure is about as close to a facial as most manly men will ever let themselves get: First comes the moisturizing lotion, then a facial massage, a wrap in a heated towel, a shmear of shaving cream, and an expert shave with a long, sharp blade. After more lotion and massaging, cool powder tops it all off. Surely a more complicated ritual than a few swipes with a Mach 3, but it's so relaxing it's like a brief trip to a spa. And with its back issues of *Playboy* and diffident staff, Jerry's feels like an old-fashioned gentlemen's club.

NAIL ART

SHE THINGS DAY SPA 230-08 SOUTH CONDUIT AVENUE, LAURELTON, QUEENS; 718-276-5212

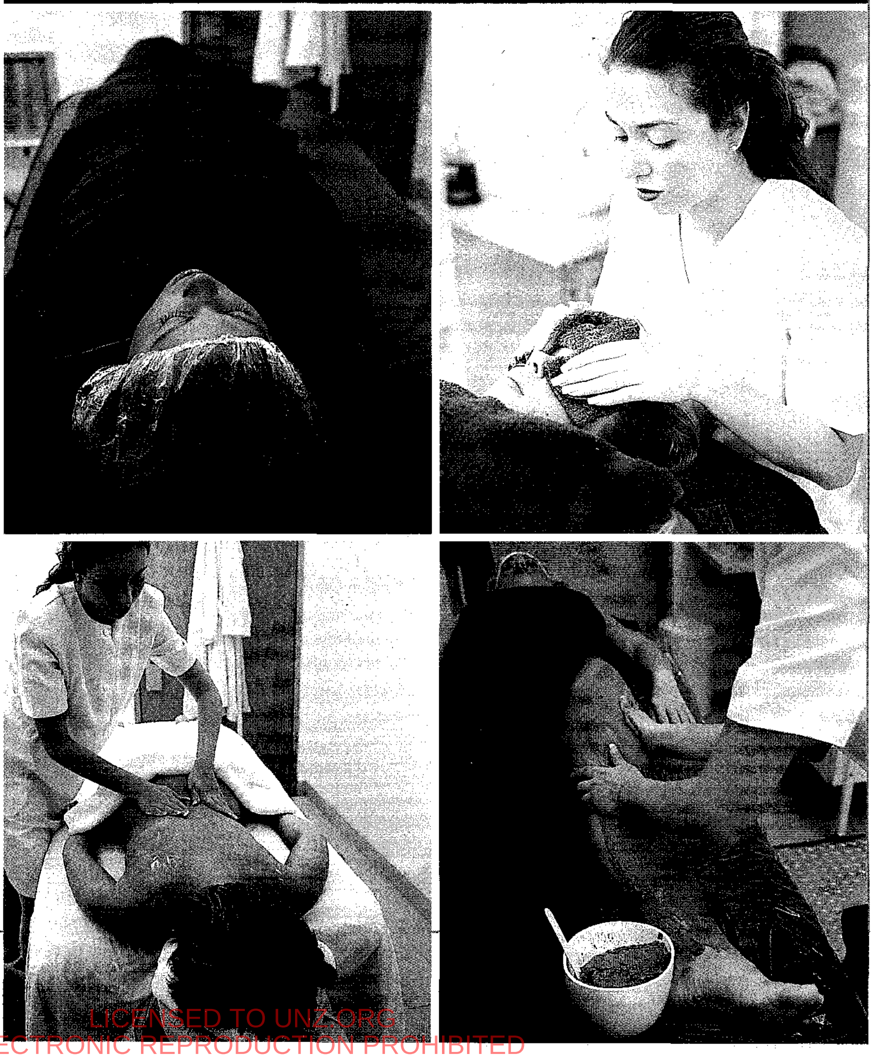
The corner nail salon is fine for an understated French manicure, but for truly over-the-top nail art—think *BAPS*, or Aretha in the "Pink Cadillac" years—head straight to She Things, owned by none other than Spinderella (Salt-n-Pepa's D.J.). They'll transform your hand into a canvas for airbrushed silhouettes set against marbleized sunsets, or brightly colored tropical scenes accented with rhinestones and sparkles. "It's a ghetto look," Derek Khan, stylist to Mary J. Blige and Brandy, says approvingly. "But now you see these little white girls with their nails done. It's the rage." "The kind of art we do depends on the season," Spin explains while having her hair done. "In the summer, you've got the palm trees, things like that. Whatever you want, we've got." The artistry starts at $20, part of which goes to charity. "After all, you feel most beautiful when you're doing beautiful things," Spinderella says. And what better way to be Queens for a day?

SALON

AKS 694 MADISON AVENUE, AT 62TH STREET; 888-0707

A chic Madison Avenue salon fronted by a Parisian may sound intimidating, but AKS is the closest thing the hairdressing world has to a commune. After defecting from the Frederic Fekkai Salon last year—taking many of its high-profile clients with them—Alain

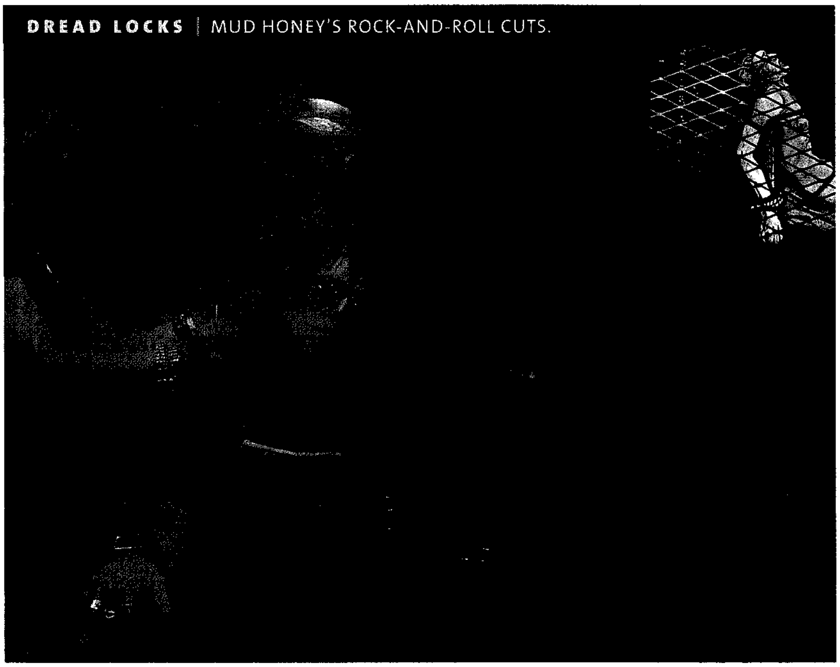
60 MINUTES | EQUINOX'S MULTIPURPOSE BEAUTY HOUR.



Photographs by Amy Freeth.

H Armstrong Roberts

Pinon, Susanna Romano, and Kao Hui established this full-service salon as a profit-sharing venture in which every last employee has a stake. Pinon, who tends to the tonsorial needs of Linda Fiorentino and David Bowie, has a keen sense of proportion and shape, and colorist J. Antony always finds a balance between subtle shades and vibrant shine. Every shampoo is followed by a dreamy Thai scalp massage. Prices start at $90 for a basic cut.



DREAD LOCKS | MUD HONEY'S ROCK-AND-ROLL CUTS.

BLOW-DRY

SIMON SABAG AT DANIEL
22 EAST 66TH STREET; 517-4566

Shiny, bouncy shampoo advertisement isn't easy to achieve. (Consider Mariah Carey's recent Cowardly Lion look to appreciate how much effort goes into her more frequently seen stick-straight do.) And a lot can go wrong along the way: Performed by the wrong stylist, a blow-dry can take an hour, scorch your ears or scalp, or leave you looking like a poufy wedge. Sabag, however, leaves even the most wire-haired clients with straight, silky tresses in only twenty minutes—and the effect lasts for days ($45–$55). Benoit Moeyaert at Kim Lepine (673 Madison Avenue, at 61st Street; 355-4247) is also great, at $60. And Natasha Galeev at Color & Cut (106 East 23rd Street; 475-2806) is a valuable fashion-world secret: The salon may not be glamorous, but her blow-dries are, and they cost only $26 for medium-length hair.

THERAPEUTIC MASSAGE

DR. MARGOLIN'S WELLNESS SPA 166 FIFTH AVENUE, AT 21ST STREET; 675-9355

The massages offered by Sam Cagnina at Dr. Margolin's Wellness Center aren't mere luxuries; they're deep stuff, designed to alleviate acute or chronic physical problems, and they may entail some soreness the day after. But for those who suffer from sports injuries or posture problems—even those whose neck and shoulders are in a permanent state of tension—they can provide welcome relief. On their way out, Cagnina's clients are handed what looks like a post-op instruction sheet with no fewer than fifteen bulleted items and directions for follow-up care. He even calls the next day to check on your progress. A one-hour massage is $80.

PEDICURE

MUD MASK PERSONAL CARE SALON 156 FIFTH AVENUE, AT 21ST STREET; 979-6685

Some of the most elaborate pedicures now involve the sort of intricate pampering usually associated with high-end facials. Mud Mask's Aromatherapeutic Pedicure ($33) uses glycolic acid to exfoliate dead skin cells, and seaweed extracts to fight dehydration. Your feet will be soaked in a soothing liquid made from tea-tree oil, scrubbed with sea salt, and massaged with collagen cream before your nails are shaped and polished. Warren Tricomi Salon (16 West 57th Street; 262-8899) has a separate Moroccan-style room with golden bowls in which to soak your feet ($45), and at the Four Seasons Spa (57 East 57th Street; 758-5700; $90), pedicures involve eight decadent steps, a massage, and a quick dip in paraffin wax. You'll hate to hide the results in your shoes.

ROCK-AND-ROLL HAIRCUT

MUD HONEY 148 SULLIVAN STREET; 533-1160

With the average price of a cut or dye job hovering around $60, SoHo's Mud Honey isn't likely to attract too many starving musicians. But the pornographic stained-glass mural, electric chairs in the waiting area, and medieval torture implements above each stylist's station make this sado-salon the coif of choice for New York's rock elite as well as for scores of touring musicians in town for just a gig and a snip. The staff will obligingly turn your ratty tresses from mousy brown to platinum or green, or from flat to spiked to singed. Don't come here to gawk at stars, though; that kind of behavior elicits considerable hostility from the staff—as does any attempt to pay with a credit card. Above all, as owner Michael Matula bluntly puts it, "don't come here if you don't like loud rock and roll, 'cause that's all we play."

NEW FACIAL

ERBIUM LASER FACIAL 30 EAST 76TH STREET; 249-3050

Compared with the gentle caresses of skilled hands, the quick zap of a laser gun might seem an eerily futuristic way to improve one's complexion. Nevertheless, dermatologist Steven Victor wields the high-tech tool to vaporize the skin's topmost layer—relax; it's painless—thereby cleansing, exfoliating, and stimulating skin growth in just over ten minutes ($200). Dr. Fredric Valauri (3 East 76th Street; 439-0080) also performs space-age facials, but he uses a soft-light laser, which doesn't penetrate the skin as deeply but leaves

Photograph by Danny Clin

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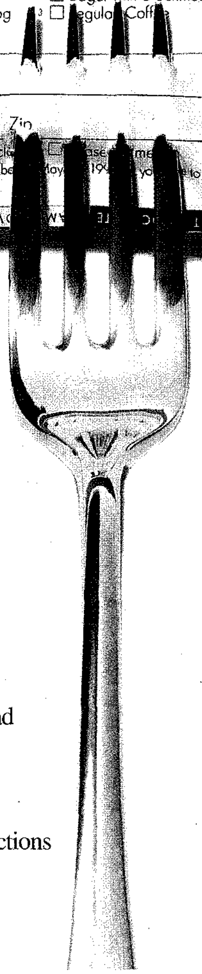

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CITYMEALS·ON·WHEELS

it incredibly soft and glowing. It can even lighten dark spots ($300). The $300 anti-gravity facial at Skin and Body Care (50 East 78th Street; 585-4228) includes aromatherapy steam cleansing, a gentle electric current (to perk sagging muscles), a pass with a modified cellulite-busting machine (to increase circulation and lymphatic drainage), acupuncture (to soften lines and release stress), and some foot reflexology just for good measure.

HENNA TATTOO

THE MEHNDI PROJECT 969-8820

Here in New York, mehndi, the Indian tradition of temporary filigreelike tattoos, has gone from obscure anthropological reference to ultra-cool hipster accessory to just another wacky thing kids are doing these days. Salons from Alphabet City to Jackson Heights now cater to the decorative whims of multicultural-trend stalkers, and Urban Outfitters even sells a do-it-yourself dye kit (as do most Indian groceries). For truly exquisite results, however, no one can touch the Mehndi Project, a group of artists who've done extensive research into both the history and the aesthetics of the process. "We want to maintain a sense of ritual," explains Stephanie Rudloe, the director. Each unique, astonishingly intricate design is made with natural dyes and lasts up to two weeks. In addition to the wearable art they take home with them, clients are treated to a finger massage, aromatic sprays, and a lesson on ancient design. Prices range from $10 to $200, and these artists will even make house calls.

HAIR REMOVAL

VANISHING POINT 4 WEST 16TH STREET; 888-778-8870

Flesh-baring season is on the way, so photo epilation, the latest FDA-approved route to smooth legs, has been generating a lot of interest of late. At Vanishing Point, a technician applies a clear gel to whatever area you want denuded, then zaps it—one patch at a time—with a quick pulse of light. Fifteen minutes is all it takes for bikini lines or upper lips, and 30 is the average for half-legs, though four successive treatments are required to keep you hairless for at least a couple of years. (It doesn't work that well on fine, blonde hair—"but you'd be surprised how few true blondes there are," one technician laughs.) The zapping hurts about as much as a rubber band's snap; the bill hurts considerably more. Packages range from $350 for the upper lip to $1,400 for a half-leg.

HANDICRAFT | THE MEHNDI PROJECT'S WORK.

EXFOLIATION

DORIT BAXTER 47 WEST 57TH STREET; 371-4542

Sesame seeds, grape seeds, apricot kernels, papaya, and pumpkin—they're all being used now to smooth rough skin and leave you rosy and soft. Though these fruit treatments can be delightfully fragrant, nothing beats the old-fashioned mixture of Dead Sea salt and essential oils. At Dorit Baxter, one reclines on a heated blanket during the half-hour scrub, which is followed by a half-hour massage, all for just $75. The luxe Peninsula Spa (700 Fifth Avenue, at 55th Street; 903-3910) takes an Ayurvedic approach: a (light) dry scrub, a second scrub with an herbal paste, and a massage with essential oil ($100).

MAKEOVER

KIMARA AHNERT MAKEUP STUDIO
1113 MADISON AVENUE, AT 84TH STREET; 452-4252

Life-altering makeovers are a staple of daytime chat shows, but in the real world, people who promise to update your maquillage often alter little more than your bank balance. Unlike the barely disguised sales pitches that take place at department-store cosmetics counters, however, an hourlong audience with Kimara Ahnert can indeed give one a whole new look—and a new outlook too ($125). Reposed on a Louis XIV settee in her tastefully opulent townhouse, the seemingly ageless stylist inquires about your beauty habits and their emotional import—how does waterproof mascara make you feel?—before fishing through your old half-used makeup and encouraging you to jettison the excess baggage. She'll show you not only what colors and products to use but also how to apply them. And she takes notes as she goes along, so you can refresh your memory at home. At the end of the hour, you can buy her signature products, or not. Just make sure you have somewhere nice to wear that face.

SHVITZ

BANIA 602 CONEY ISLAND AVENUE, BROOKLYN; 718-853-2525

A staple of Jewish-immigrant life on the old Lower East Side, shvitzes—or steam baths (*shvitz* means "sweat" in Yiddish)—were places to steam all the bad stuff out of your system, to see your neighbors, and to kibitz. Most have long since gone out of business, but this one opened just three years ago to serve Coney Island's burgeoning community of Russian Jews. Breaking with tradition, the 10,000-square-foot marble bathhouse is permanently coed, and it's so of-the-moment that Matt Damon recently shot a scene there. But don't go for the glamour; go to get roughed up. For $20 more than the $15 all-day admission fee, one of Bania's employees will be happy to administer a *platka*—a thrashing with water-soaked oak leaves that stimulates circulation and exfoliates your skin. Then unwind in the Jacuzzi with nineteen of your friends. When you're through shvitzing, revive with a round of red caviar and vodka.

Photograph by Amy Fr

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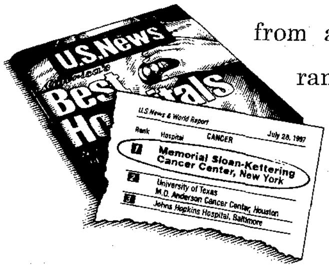
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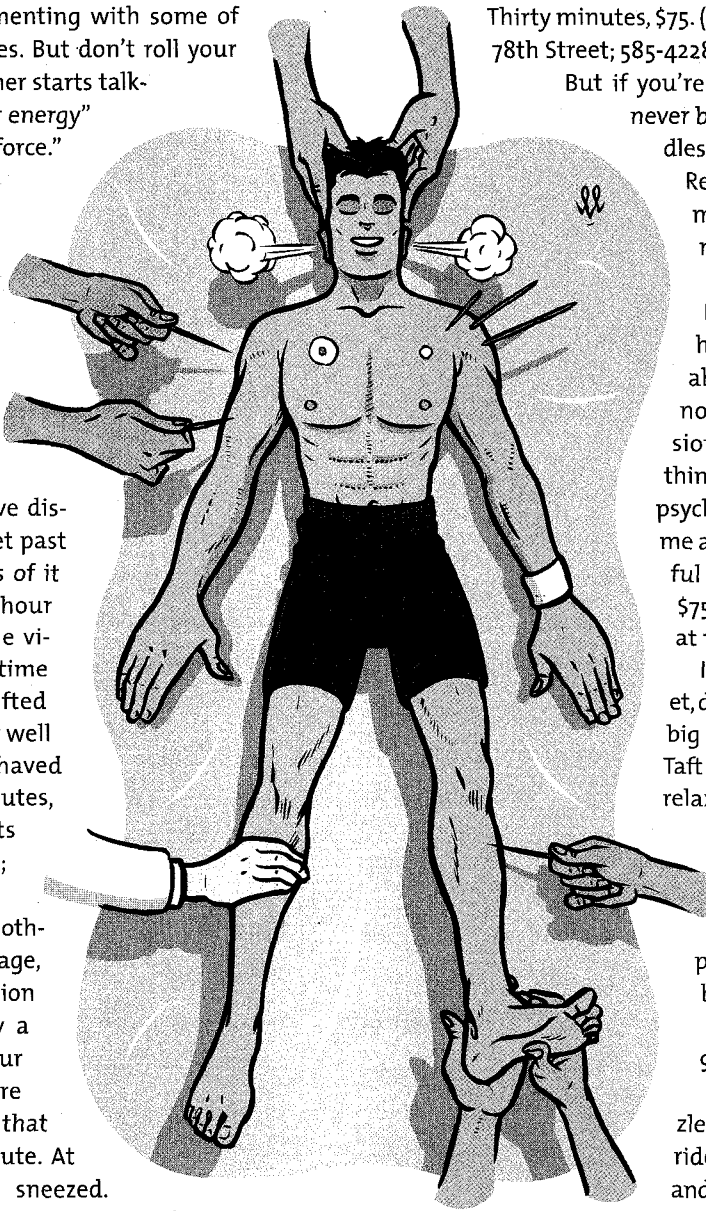
THE NEW-AGE SCIENCE OF MELLOWING OUT

Relax, Already!

Despite its mellow connotations, relaxation therapy is a serious business at spas and gyms and salons across town. So if you feel your fists clench every time Joan Rivers shrieks, "That color is *you*," consider experimenting with some of these newfangled services. But don't roll your eyes when your practitioner starts talking about *"centering your energy"* or "channeling your life force." It'll all be over in an hour.

At the far end of the silly spectrum is the Origins Feel-Good Spa's light therapy, which takes place within a heated egglike capsule that emits full-spectrum light (good for jet lag and seasonal affective disorder). I couldn't quite get past the *Mork and Mindy*ness of it all and spent most of my hour inside it playing with the vibration dial. But by the time they hatched me, I'd drifted off to sleep. Imagine how well it works for better-behaved clients. Thirty to 60 minutes, $25 to $45. (The Sports Center at Chelsea Piers; 336-6780.)

Origins also offers a soothing reflexology foot massage, based on the ancient notion that the foot is literally a map to the self. After your feet are soaked, they're kneaded with a touch that varies from gentle to acute. At one point, I suddenly sneezed. "Makes sense," said Mike, the (very cute) therapist. "I'm working on your head-and-sinus area." Calming and strangely intimate—and not too ticklish. Forty-five minutes, $50.



Phyllis M. Shapiro, a licensed acupuncturist, asks her clients where they "hold tension," then slides a dozen or so needles into the relevant pressure points along their ears. I barely felt a prick, but within minutes my ears were throbbing painlessly, and my head seemed to bloom into La La Land. The world was deliciously far away. Thirty minutes, $75. (Skin and Body Care, 50 East 78th Street; 585-4228.)

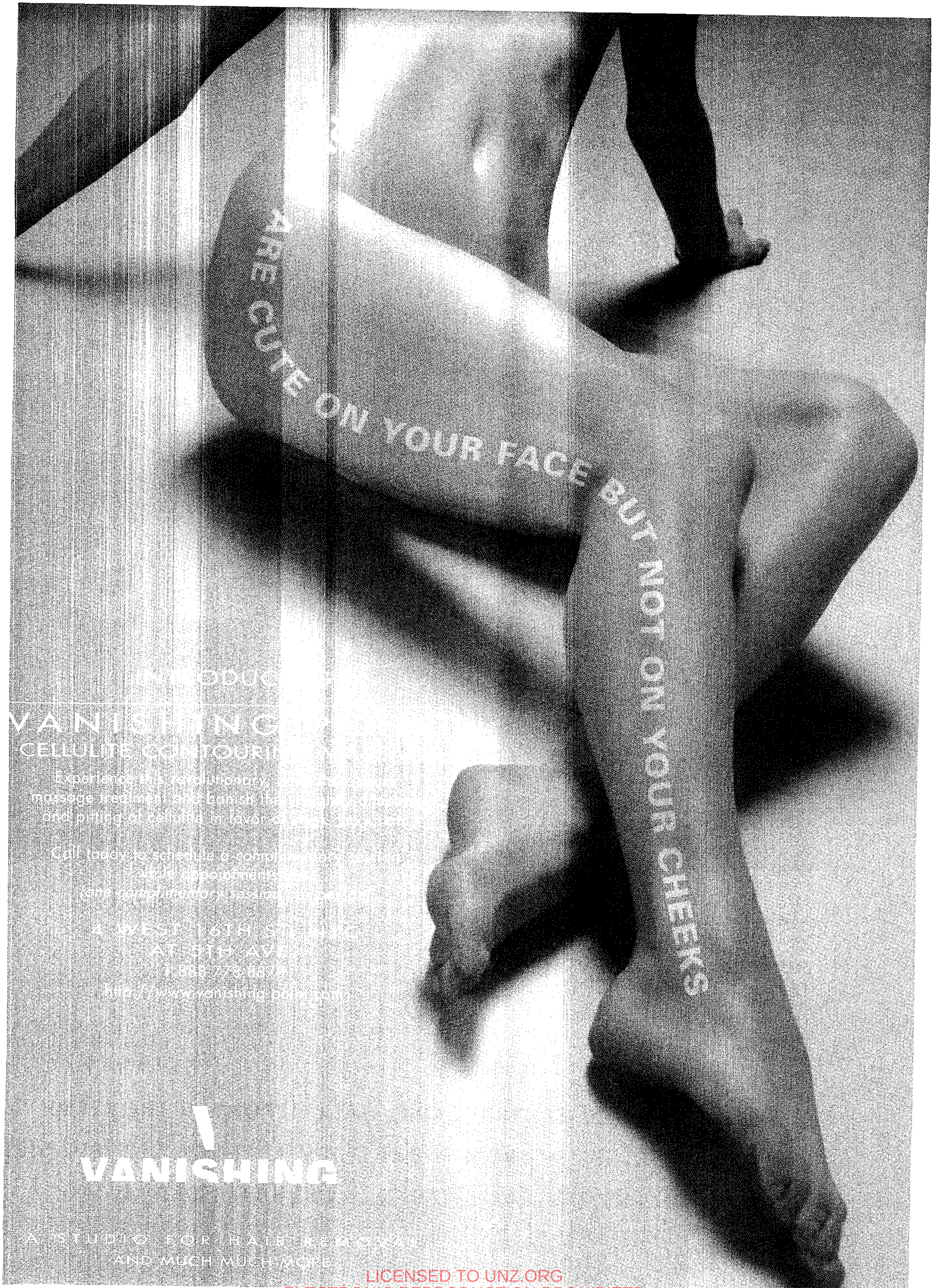
But if you're the sort of person who'll never be able to relax around needles, consider the ultra-ethereal Reiki, a "noninvasive energy massage." As I lay on the massage table at Equinox's Wellness Spa, Reiki master Raven Keyes moved her hands back and forth just above my body and announced, "You have permission to let go!" I started out thinking it was about as legit as psychic surgery, but it did make me all tingly. I left feeling peaceful and gooey. Sixty minutes; $75. (344 Amsterdam Avenue, at 76th Street; 721-1100.)

In Blue Light Flotation's quiet, dark flotation chambers (just big enough to bury President Taft in), there's nothing to do but relax. The warm water is reassuringly amniotic, and it's nice to find a therapy that doesn't ask you to buy into any philosophy. You'll emerge feeling born anew. Sixty minutes, $50. (148 West 23rd Street; 989-6061.)

And if you're just too frazzled to deal with the subway ride to the spa, stay at home and listen to Boris Mourashkin's *Bio-energetic Psychotropic Music*—vibro-acoustic massage that's as ambient as anything by Tricky, and a lot cheaper than a headful of needles. (The Relaxation Company; 800-788-6670.)

MIKE ALBO

Illustration by Mark Mat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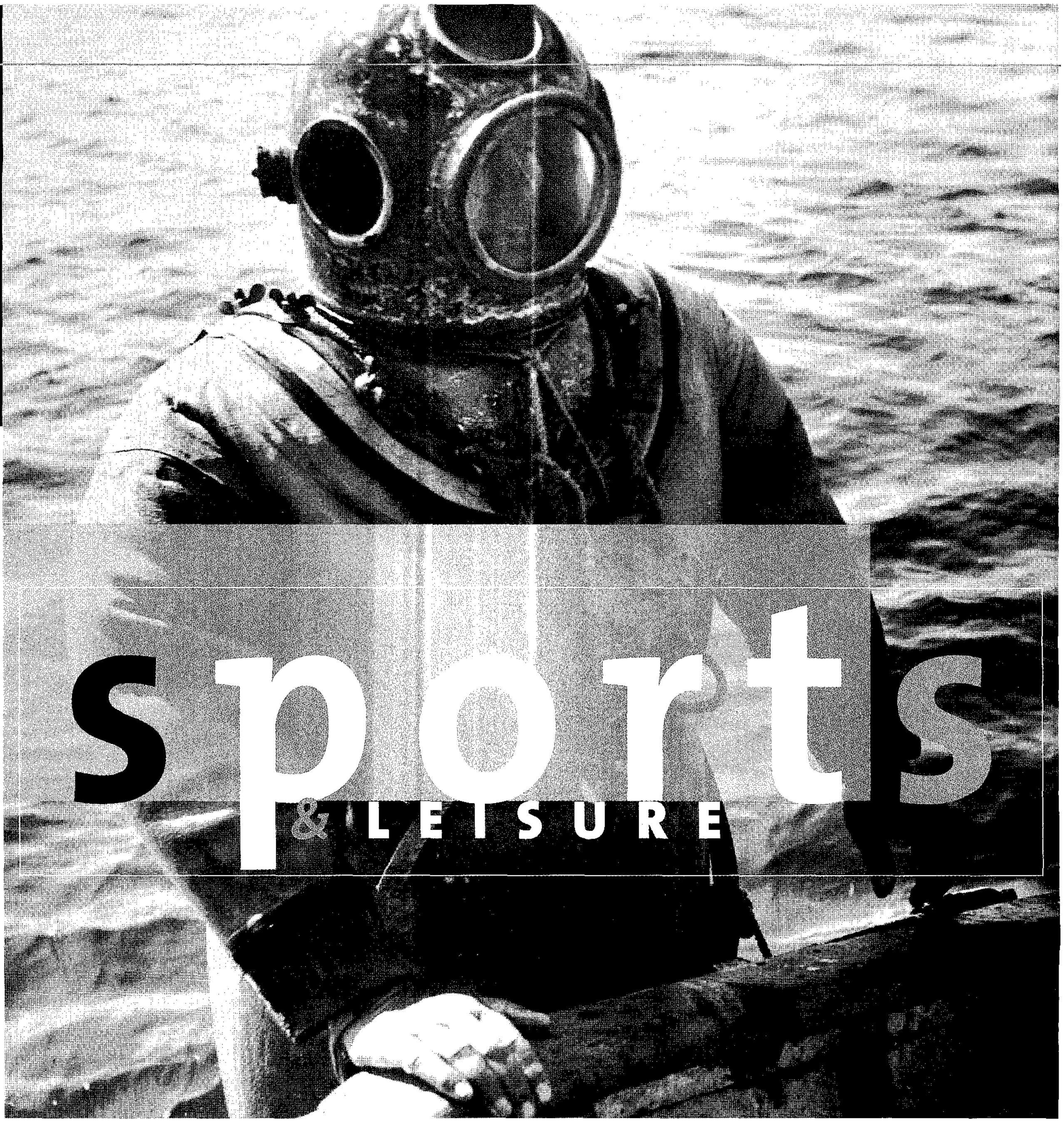


sports
& LEISURE

BOXING GYM

CHURCH STREET BOXING GYM
25 PARK PLACE; 571-1333

This is as democratic and unintimidating as a boxing gym gets without losing the feel of authenticity. "It's a microcosm of New York City, right here," insists Justin Blair, the 27-year-old boxing-impresario-in-the-making who founded Church Street last year. "You've got blue-collar, white-collar, gray-collar, two collars, and no collar." The 10,000-square-foot gym has one full-size elevated ring and will add another in an upcoming renovation. Membership is a reasonable $60 per month, but training fees vary because you negotiate the price yourself with the various trainers on site, which Blair calls "part of the ritual of boxing." Church Street also happens to be the best place in the city to watch boxing. High-energy crowds, which have included Mike Tyson, pack the place for its periodic Friday-night fights.

SAILING CLASS

MANHATTAN SAILING SCHOOL NORTH COVE OFF BATTERY PARK CITY; 786-0400

No sense waiting for your ship to come in if you have no idea how to sail away in it. Prepare now by enrolling at the

SMASH ONE OUT OF CENTRAL PARK, STALK HERONS IN THE REEDS, REEL IN BLUEFISH FROM THE EAST RIVER, CHECK THAT BIG GIRL INTO THE BOARDS, OR LEARN TO SAIL INTO THE SUNSET.

eleven-year-old Manhattan Sailing School. And don't forget to bring your friends (you get 15 percent off the $340-and-up fee by signing up as a group of four). Each four-person class is taught on a highly maneuverable 24-foot, fixed-keel J/24 sailboat, and at the end of a five-week course (which you can also cram into one weekend, if you like), you should be able to crew on a sailboat under "light to moderate" conditions. Meaning: no nor'easters for you. But you may enjoy sitting out the storm on land: "We're not a singles club, but when sailors get together and have a few drinks at the bar, they certainly can get friendly," says instructor Bill Heffner.

WOMEN'S ICE HOCKEY

BROOKLYN BLADES 718-595-2808 OR WWW.BROOKLYNBLADES.ORG

"It's great to get out on the ice and get sweaty with a bunch of women who are as fanatical as you are," says Martha Ehrenfeld, who works for an educational nonprofit and serves as captain of the Brooklyn Blades. The women's recreational hockey team (which just finished its fourth season with a record of 17 wins, 14 losses, and 3 ties) is short on Olympic-quality talent but not on pride. "We just got back from Toronto—the A team won two out of three games," boasts coach Aaron Foeste. "They beat both Canadian teams—which is the goal of American hockey." The team's players include an Episcopal priest from New Jersey, a professor from Rutgers, a cyber-comedian, and an NYU doctor. Not everyone has years of ice time. "I had to learn to skate to play," says B-teamer Jill Newman, who has played hockey for less than a year. "It's a great sport—it's fast and it's fun."

GROWN-UP EXERCISE STUDIO

BACK IN SHAPE STUDIO
37 WEST 54TH STREET; 245-9131

Thumping disco beats and scary muscle boys get pretty tiresome once you turn 40; by 50, many once-active people have thrown in the towel altogether. Back In Shape provides a real alternative: Located in a homey midtown brownstone, it offers small classes (five to eight people each) that emphasize non-impact exercise, toning, breathing, alignment, and general well-being. Owner Marjorie Jaffe pays attention to each of her students, who range in age from 30 to 89. "After 30, every body needs individual attention," she says. Classes are $18 for a single session.

PUBLIC POOL

METROPOLITAN POOL AND FITNESS CENTER 261 BEDFORD AVENUE, GREENPOINT, BROOKLYN; 718-599-5707

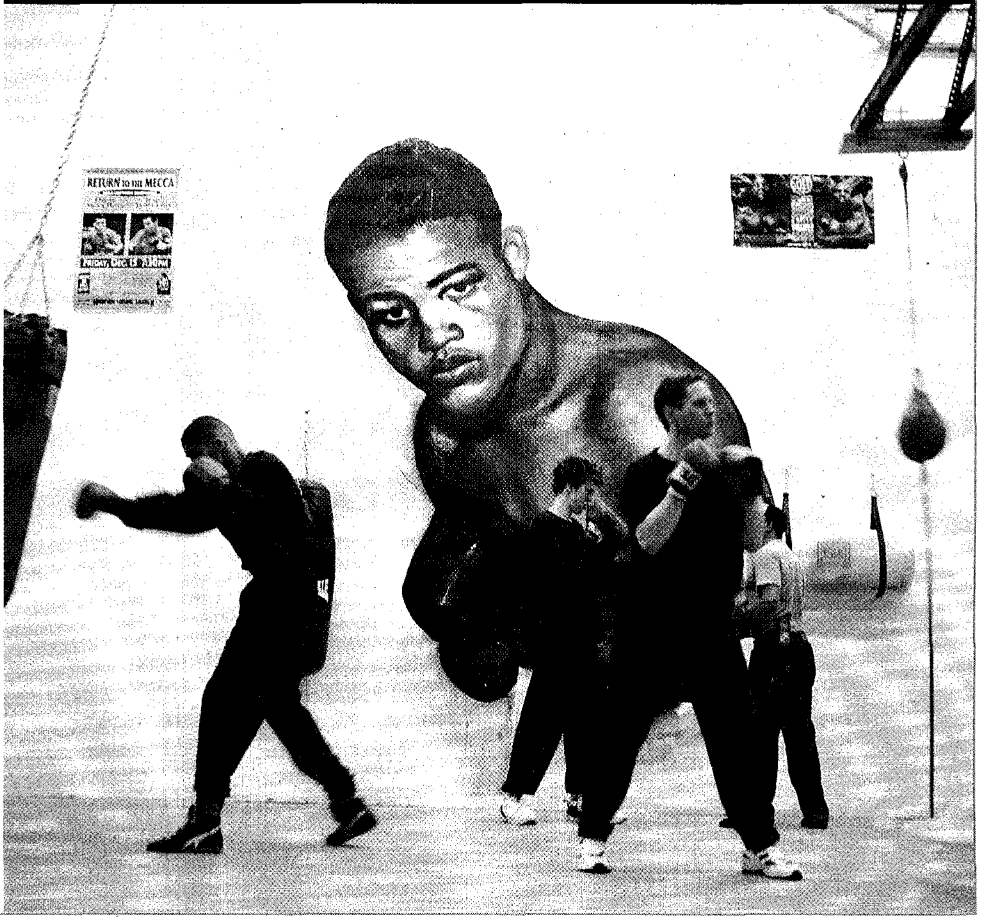
Public pool is a phrase that brings to mind hordes of cannonballing, loose-bladdered 8-year-olds—not, in other words, a place conducive to serious exercise. But the dozens of pools owned by the city couldn't be more hassle-free. For one thing, there's the price: as little as ten bucks a year (yes, a *year*) at some, making them the best water-related bargain in New York this side of the Staten Island Ferry. Metropolitan Pool isn't the largest of the year-round public pools, but thanks to a recent renovation, it's the best. Light pours in through the windows and skylight, reflecting off the high, copper-tiled ceiling. The pool does suffer logjams during the peak after-work and Saturday hours, but attendance for the morning block (7 to 9:30 A.M.) is blissfully sparse. Women, take note: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10 A.M. to noon, the pool is "ladies only"; the neighborhood's Hasidic women show up and curtain the windows to preserve a sense of decorum.

SOFTBALL LEAGUE

YORKVILLE SPORTS ASSOCIATION
645-6488

So George Plimpton hasn't gotten back to you about playing in this summer's Artists & Writers game in the Hamptons? The Yorkville Sports Association won't duck your calls. It has more than 200 teams in male, female, and coed leagues, and even though most of them are corporate clubs, Yorkville is known for accommodating individuals. Every preseason, a scrimmage is held to form teams of unattached players and to let existing teams fill holes on their rosters. Unfortunately, like most leagues, Yorkville begins its summer season in April, so this year's scrimmage is already past. But there's still a decent

A FIGHTING CHANCE | MIXING IT UP AT THE CHURCH STREET BOXING GYM.



otograph by Pete Kuhns.

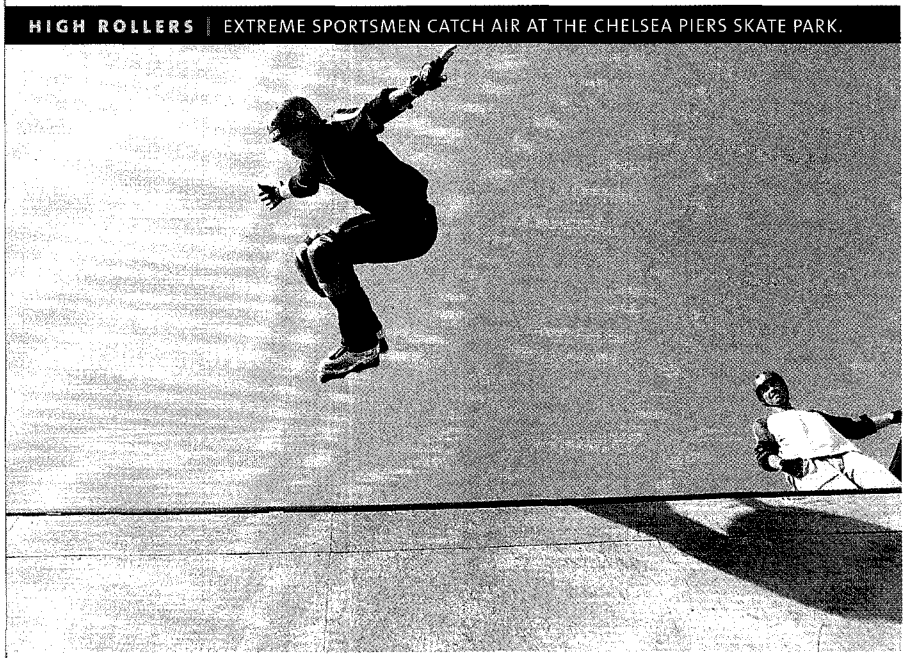
chance Yorkville can find a place for you. A regular season of twelve games costs about $100, and nearly all the games are played in Manhattan. Every season ends with a party where the champions are crowned and highlight videos are screened. You'll have to live without a write-up in *Dan's Papers.*

DAREDEVIL SKATE COURSE

CHELSEA PIERS WEST 23RD STREET AND THE HUDSON RIVER; 336-6666

Ordinarily, self-respecting street skaters wouldn't be caught dead mingling with fitness-center yuppies. But 'boarders and 'bladers alike can't stay away from Chelsea Piers. The chief attraction for both is a top-of-the-line "Half Pipe"—an enormous pipe sliced in half, lengthwise—that's 24 feet wide, 11½ feet high. Since opening the course last August, Chelsea Piers has added a mini-ramp suitable for training and goofing around, a "Fun Box" with a steel rail cut in half, a quarter-pipe perfect for accelerating to the next trick, and a mini-ramp with a spine. Chelsea Piers offers clinics every Friday starting May 8. Just $14 for a day pass—you have nothing to lose but your balance.

HIGH ROLLERS | EXTREME SPORTSMEN CATCH AIR AT THE CHELSEA PIERS SKATE PARK.



HURLING

GAELIC PARK BROADWAY AT 240TH STREET; 718-548-9568

Part of the pleasure of watching hurling is the comfort of knowing you're not playing it. How nice it is to take refuge in the stands while burly men run up and down a rugby field, three-foot wooden sticks in their hands, smacking and tossing a tiny ball (a *sliothair*—pronounced "slither") into the netted goal. Other attractions include the vocal, heavy-brogued bleacher crowd and the social scene at the bar (thoughtfully placed at one end of the field), which, inexplicably, serves no Guinness. Play begins "around noon" on Sundays from April to October at Gaelic Park, accompanied by equally rowdy Irish-football (rugby) games. Admission is $6.

PING-PONG

FAT CAT BILLIARDS 75 CHRISTOPHER STREET; 675-6056

Ping-Pong aficionados have serious needs: They need an ample supply of perfectly round, clean, white balls and paddles that have all of the handle and surface padding intact. They need good lighting; a net wall to block spike shots from clattering across the room; and access to a good jukebox, a pinball machine, and an ashtray. That's why they prefer Fat Cat Billiards, a cavernous subterranean world where the Dirty Harry pinball machine lives on. Fat Cat has two secluded rooms surrounded by net walls, specifically designed for Ping-Pong wizards, who do their best Forrest Gump for just $3.75 an hour per person during the week (more on weekend nights).

SPINNING CLASS

REVOLUTION STUDIO 104 WEST 14TH STREET; 206-8785

Turning out the lights at the beginning of her class is Terri Walsh's stroke of genius: Not only does the darkness keep you from feeling too self-conscious about the differences between your physique and that of the Adonis beside you; it allows you to lose yourself in the rhythm of the exercise. A longtime personal trainer who has devoted herself to cross-training, Walsh is something of an inspiration herself, living proof that biking doesn't have to make your quads look like tree trunks. And one needn't join the studio to spin with the best; you can buy classes individually for $12.

SEMI-PRO FOOTBALL

BROOKLYN MARINERS KINGSBAY FIELD, AVENUE Z AND COYLE STREET, SHEEPSHEAD BAY, BROOKLYN; 718-253-5203

For most guys, the gridiron is a fond memory. But for Brooklyn Mariners, it's Wednesday nights at 8:30. "They're just guys that love to play football," says 64-year-old coach Robert "Pudgie" Walsh. "They love the camaraderie." Last season, the Mariners, a semi-pro team made up of cops, firefighters, brokers, and schoolteachers, won every regular-season game but one in the eighteen-team Garden State League. They are ranked sixth or eighth nationally, depending on who's counting, and after 41 years, the Mariners have had only three losing seasons. Tryouts are June 7 at Kings Bay Field. Just show up ready to play. If you make the cut, uniforms and equipment are supplied, but that's pretty much it. "If you're gonna play football," says Walsh, who has coached the team since the very beginning, "and you're not motivated, you better play touch."

PUBLIC GOLF COURSE

SPLIT ROCK PELHAM BAY PARK, THE BRONX; 718-225-4653

Old-growth maples and oaks sprinkled around the course make the

Photograph by Pete Ku

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Bronx's 6,714-yard Split Rock the most charming and challenging of the city's thirteen public golf courses. They also make it the most annoying, crowding the fairways, snickering among themselves when you shank one onto a neighboring green, reaching out with their branches to ruin a perfect stroke. But you won't find a better course for $20.50 ($22.50 on weekends). The greens are actually green, golfers replace their divots, the tee areas aren't packed harder than concrete—none of which can be said for other public courses, like Mosholu or Marine Park. During the summer, reserve your weekend game at Split Rock two Tuesdays in advance. A 30-minute car ride (from Manhattan), or the No. 6 to the last stop, then an $8 gypsy-cab ride.

BIRDWATCHING

JAMAICA BAY WILDLIFE REFUGE GATEWAY NATIONAL RECREATION AREA; 718-338-3338

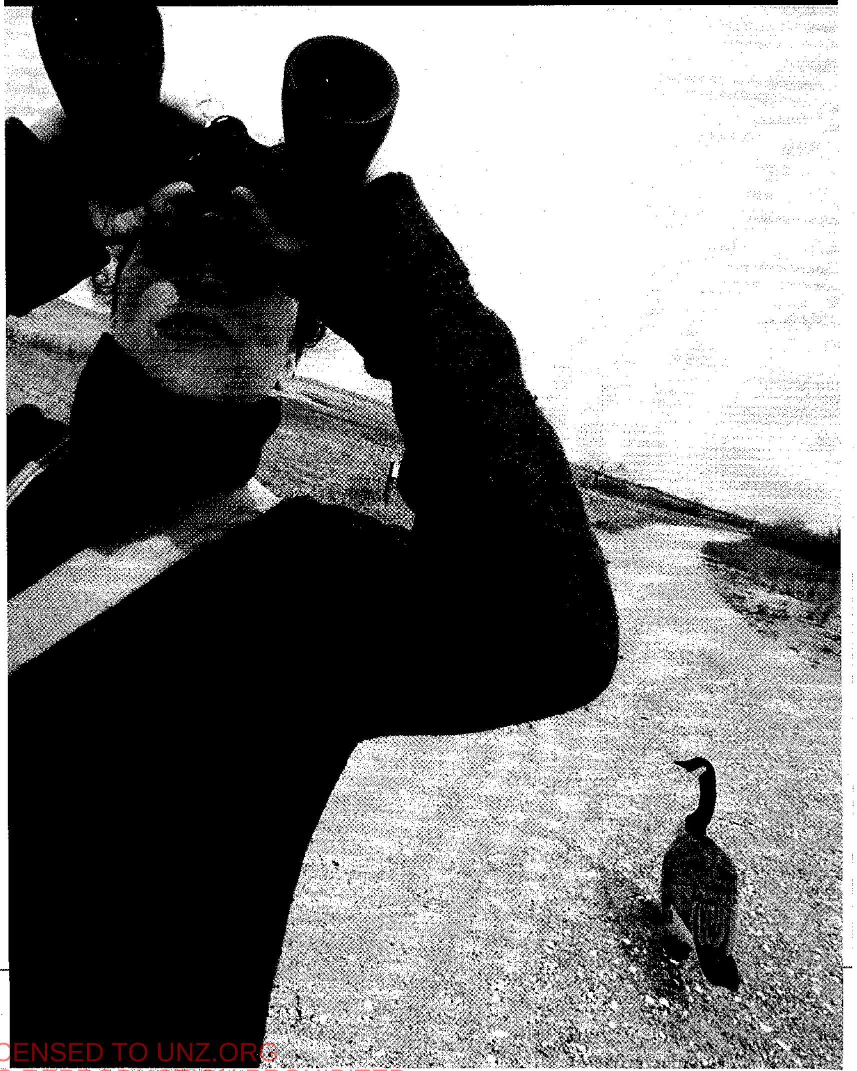
Venture to the outer reaches of the five boroughs to find the urban ornithologist's ultimate oasis. A birder's checklist, written by rangers, can guide those who don't know a vireo's song from a car alarm's tweet. At West Pond, the Central Park favorites (warblers, woodpeckers, and flycatchers) tutter in trees, sandpipers and semipalmated plovers motor around the lapping water, and secretive clapper rails and herons lurk in the reeds. Many species call the place home year-round, but spring migration season (early April to early June) is when the feathers really fly. For even more spectacular viewings, travel three hours south to the New Jersey Audubon Society's Cape May Bird Observatory (609-861-0700), where the springtime attraction is the grotesque spectacle of shorebirds feeding on horseshoe-crab eggs. *Eww.*

BOWLING ALLEY

LEISURE TIME RECREATION 625 EIGHTH AVENUE, IN THE PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL; 268-6909

Mark it down as another achievement of the Giuliani administration—1997, the year that bowling ended its slow,

SMILE AT THE BIRDIE | SEE OUR FEATHERED FRIENDS IN JAMAICA BAY.



seemingly inexorable slide toward extinction in Manhattan. Chelsea Piers opened a state-of-the-art, 40-lane bowling alley last year, and we wouldn't want to slight it in any way. Except to say that it's not the best. We cast our vote for the bowling alley at the Port Authority bus terminal. True, the PA lanes don't offer the Day-Glo balls and pins and thumping techno soundtracks of Chelsea Piers and the newly spruced-up Bowlmor on University Place. But such trippy trappings are not bowling's real pleasures. The satisfying crash of pins, a pair of funky shoes, a cold beer—Port Authority offers these and not much more.

FISHING

LIGHTHOUSE PARK ROOSEVELT ISLAND

Slide a nightcrawler onto your hook and cast your line into the swirling East River from Lighthouse Park. Balanced on the northern tip of Roosevelt Island, the park offers some darn lovely views of Manhattan, including a back-door peek at Gracie Mansion. Tugs churn by, and the relatively weak currents in the area won't sweep your lure downstream as quickly as in narrower parts of the river. Breezy Point, Battery Park, and the Canarsie pier are all good angling spots, too, but we prefer this concrete jetty and its decaying little beacon. Your most likely catch? Striped bass and bluefish. Be careful how much you eat. Call the Department of Health (800-458-1158, extension 409) for guidelines about local-fish consumption.

PARK BENCH

FORT TRYON PARK 193RD STREET AND FORT WASHINGTON AVENUE; 795-1388

You're exhausted from all this running around—finally, you just need a place to kick back. Head to Fort Tryon Park, and test out the sturdy settees overlooking the recently restored Heather Garden, the city's largest public garden with unrestricted access. Or plunk yourself down on one of the benches ringing the shady Linden Terrace. Surrounded by a 60-year-old climbing hydrangea, which explodes into bloom each May, the terrace towers almost 260 feet above the Hudson. Whichever spot you choose, you get the nicest possible view of New Jersey—the Palisades Interstate Park, originally purchased by John D. Rockefeller Jr. for the express purpose of preserving the vista for New York City parkgoers.

otograph: opposite page, Kristine Larsen.

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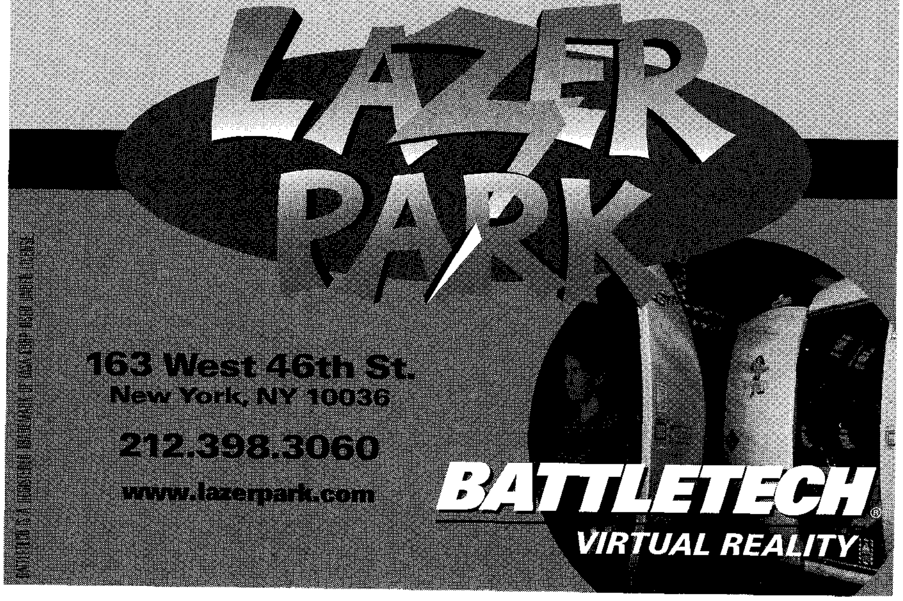

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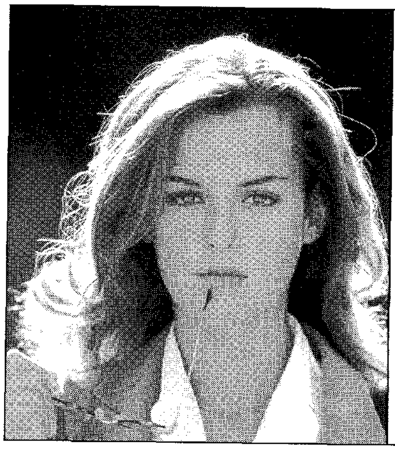

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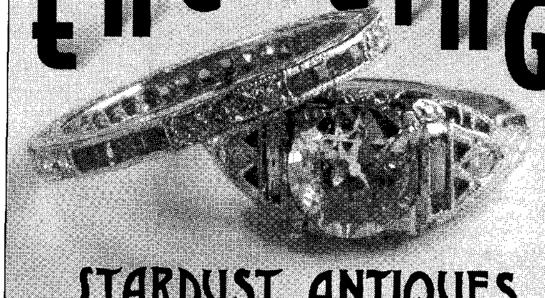

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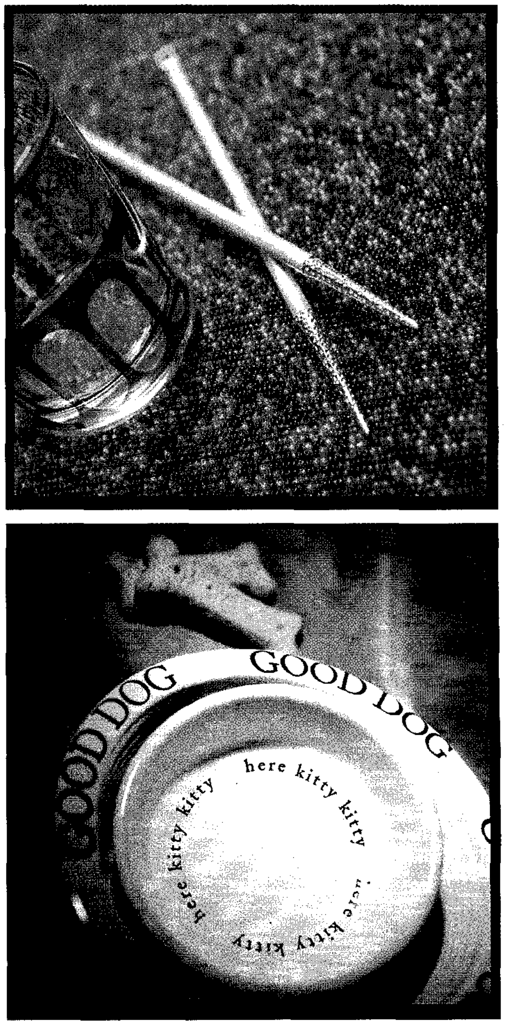
FELISSIMO, THE ASIAN EMPORIUM set in a turn-of-the-century townhouse in midtown, artfully arranges its home accessories by theme—bedroom, dining room, garden room, and so on. With the building undergoing a summer renovation, selected merchandise is now marked down, including a bonsai water fountain, was $585, now $292.50; Tateossian silver globe cuff links, were $285, now $142.50; brightly colored aluminum chopsticks, were $115, now $57.50. *Felissimo, 10 W. 56th St. (247-5656); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Sat. 10–6, Thurs. till 8; 5/2 while supplies last.*



Felissimo's housewares—for master and pet—go on sale before the store's three-month sabbatical.

Selling Yourself

ONE OF TK/PR'S BIGGEST COUPS was getting Pope John Paul II to wear a pair of a client's tennis shoes. It does the public relations for a number of big accounts—from Simon & Schuster to Speedo to *BusinessWeek*—and most of the staff have media backgrounds. Now it's offering its expertise at a discount: one-hour consultation, was $300, now $150; customized press release, was $250, now $125; media-training half-day session (to prepare for that big TV interview), was $850, now $500. *TK/PR Public Relations, Inc., 110 E. 59th St., sixth floor (909-0340); checks accepted; Mon.–Fri. 9–5; 4/27–5/8.*

Calling on René

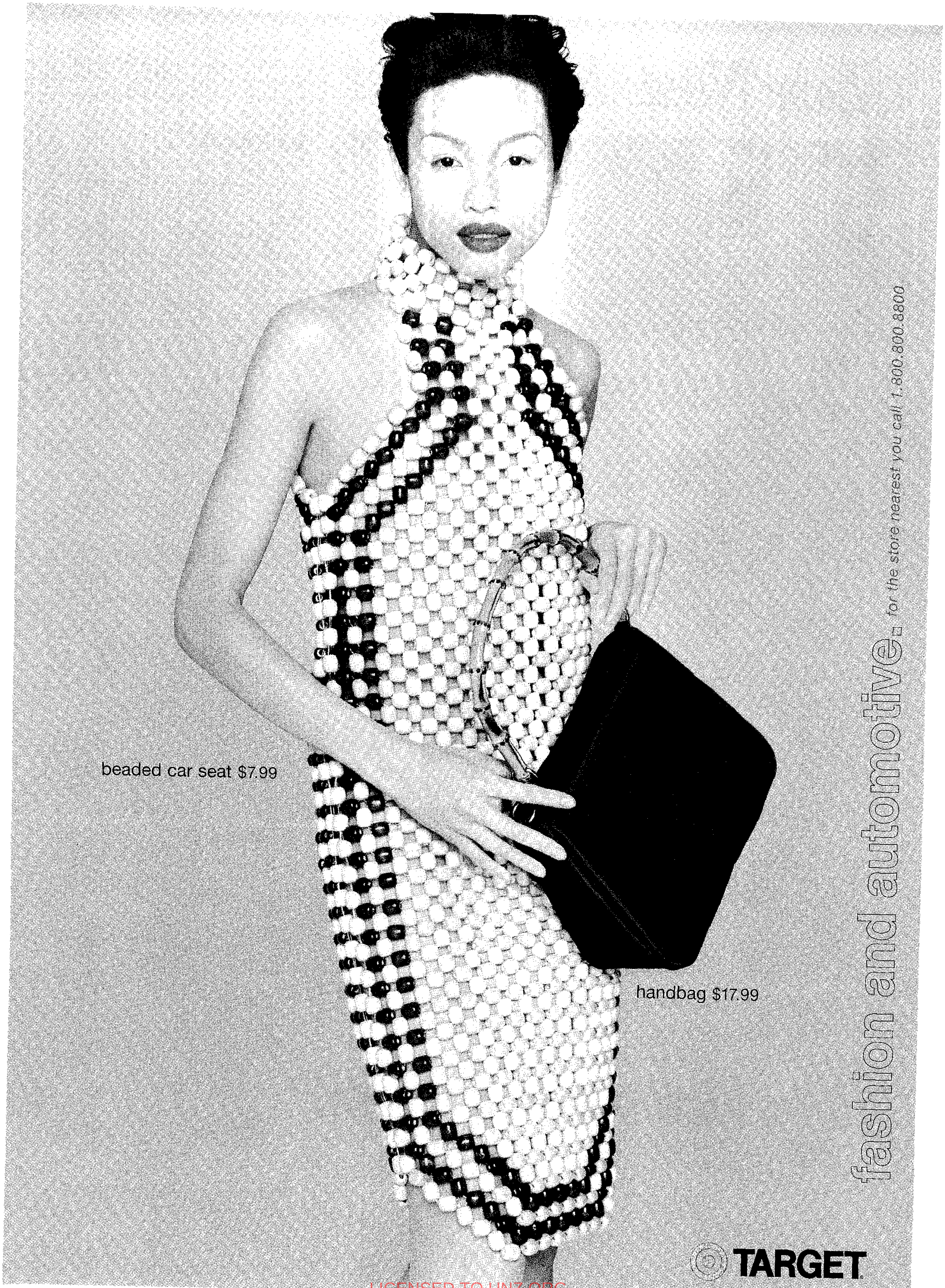
RENÉ LEZARD—THE DESIGNER WHO INTRODUCED a hotly anticipated boutique in SoHo last fall—is now opening up his showroom for a sample sale. Pants, suits, jackets, and other stock will be priced below wholesale—about 60 percent off retail. *René Lezard, 745 Fifth Ave., near 57th Street, Suite 1408 (753-7363); Tues.–Fri. 9–7, Sat. 11–6; A.E., M.C., V.; 4/28–5/2.*

DO NOT PHONE: Send suggestions to Ondine Cohane, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, six weeks before the sale. Only sales exclusive to "Sales & Bargains" and not previously advertised or published elsewhere will be considered.

Smell the Roses

IF ITS GROUNDS ARE ANYTHING TO GO BY, the Brooklyn Botanic Garden's annual sale will be a great place to buy when you are whipping your own plot into shape. It has a huge selection of indoor and outdoor plants, including annuals, herbs, houseplants, perennials, and plants for water gardens. For example, designer annuals, were $4.25 and up, now $2.75; shrubs, were $18.50 and up, now $14.50 and up; potted rosebushes, were $15 and up, now $12. *Brooklyn Botanic Garden,*

Photographs by Amy Freeth.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Ready for Bed

TWO SALES FOR SHEETS AND SUCH. ARCHIpelago—a designer and manufacturer of high-end luxury table, bed, and bath linens as well as furniture—is joining forces with ceramist Jonathan Adler for a sample sale. For example, tiered nightstands, retail $600, here $245; cashmere-and-wool-blend pillows, retail $130, here $50 and up; pillow shams, retail $80, here $10. And Area—one of our favorite downtown designers—is also putting its duvet covers, sheets, pillowcases, hand towels, napkins, and tablecloths on sale. Usually its items retail for $25–$500; here they'll range from $5 to $200. *Archipelago, 525 Broadway, near Spring St., eighth floor (334-9460); Wed. noon–7, Thurs.–Fri. 10–7; cash only.; 4/29–5/1. Area, 180 Varick St., ninth floor (924-7084); Tues.–Wed. 10–6, Thurs. till 8; checks accepted; 4/28–4/30.*

Epicurean Epicenter

ACCORDING TO STYLE MAVENS AND CHRONiclers, St. Barts still hangs on to its cachet as *the* Caribbean Island to be seen on. But even this island has a "low season." Hotel Guanahani's package (five nights in a room with an ocean view, breakfast and dinner daily, tax and service charges, and round-trip airport transfers) costs $1,500 per couple—as opposed to the usual $428 per night without dinner. Now you just have to find a reasonable airfare. *For reservations, call (800-223-6800); 4/27–8/30 and 10/1–10/31.*

All Mark Down

THE INDIVIDUAL DETAILS THAT GO INTO each of Mark Rossi's accessories do not match his very reasonable prices (even

Puff daddy: A sampling of Mark Rossi's antic, accessible home designs.

Photograph by Amy Freeth.

at retail). Baby bibs, retail $24, here $10; children's pillows, retail $25, here $15; toiletry bags, retail $55, here $25; hand towels, retail $28, here $5; wood soap dishes, retail $20, here $3; napkin rings, retail $20, here $1. *Mark Rossi, 311 Church St., No. 4 (219-0450); Thurs.–Fri. 10–6, Sat. till 4; cash only; 4/30–5/2.*

Change Your Image

FOR ALL THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE POSTponed getting their photo collection in order, the Ultimate Image's sale just might prove the motivating factor. All digital-restoration and reprinting jobs are 50 percent off (were $100, now $50), and custom color prints are 20 to 60 percent off (eight-by-ten prints, were $15, now $12). Free pickup in midtown for orders over $50. *The Ultimate Image, 443 Park Ave. So., near 30th St. (683-4838); A.E., M.C., V., checks; Mon.–Fri. 9–5:30; 5/1–5/30.*

Posh Spice

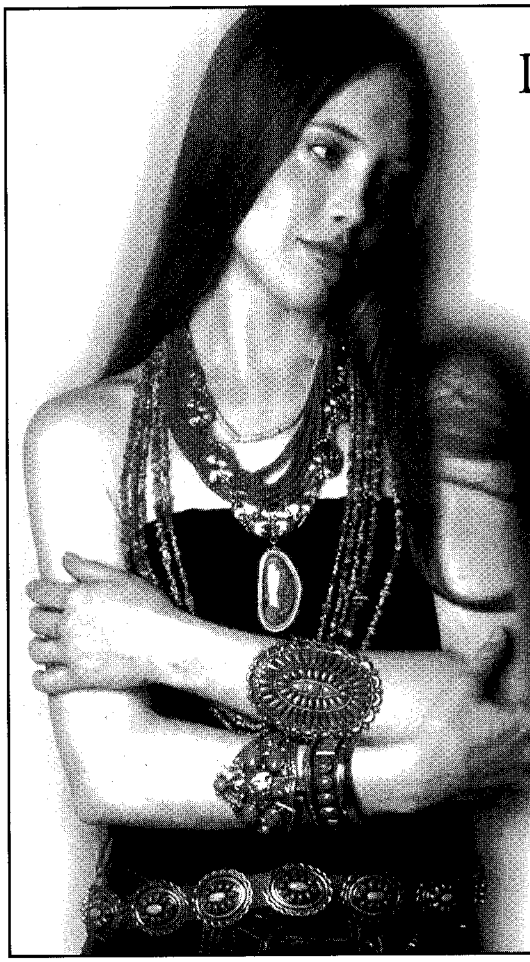
TO RAISE MONEY FOR THE LIGHTHOUSE (one of the world's leading resources for the vision-impaired), the twenty-sixth annual POSH sale puts new and slightly used designer merchandise up for grabs. Highlights include: Christian Dior day- and eveningwear and jewelry, was $1,000–$12,000, now $75–$500; a Givenchy suit, was $1,100, now $125. The benefit preview's admission is $100; other days, entrance costs $10. *The Lighthouse, 110 E. 60th St. (821-9300); checks accepted; Fri. 5:30–9, Sat. 10–6, Sun. 11–6; 5/1–5/3.*

Here's the Skinny

LIKE MANY OTHER THINGS THAT SEEM TO get more complicated the more you learn about them, we've discovered that what's new in facials changes as rapidly as it does in fashion. At Advanced Skin Care, the latest addition is the Gaia peel (the fastest peel we know), which is included in its "Spring Quartet" offer (you also get a steam bath, body scrub, renewal facial, and reflexology treatment): was $145, now $99. *Advanced Skin Care Day Spa, 532 Madison Ave., at 54th St., third floor (758-8867); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Thurs. 10–7, Fri. till 6, Sat. till 5; 5/1–5/31.*

New Age

THE NEW CALVIN? DONNA? HALSTON? FAmous designers have guided Parsons School of Design's seniors in creating their own garments. Although some



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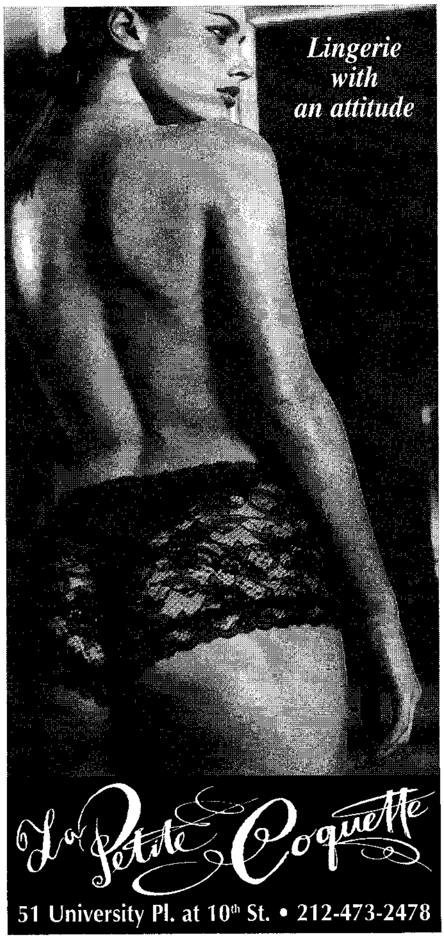

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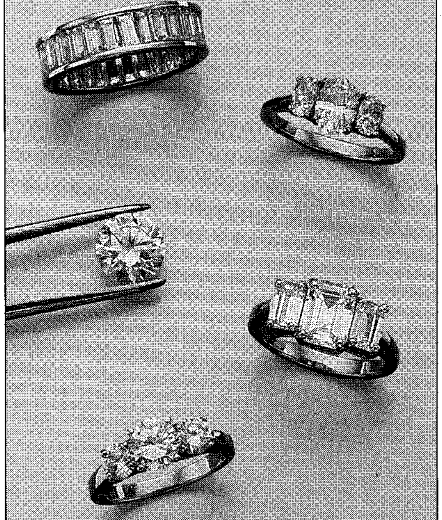

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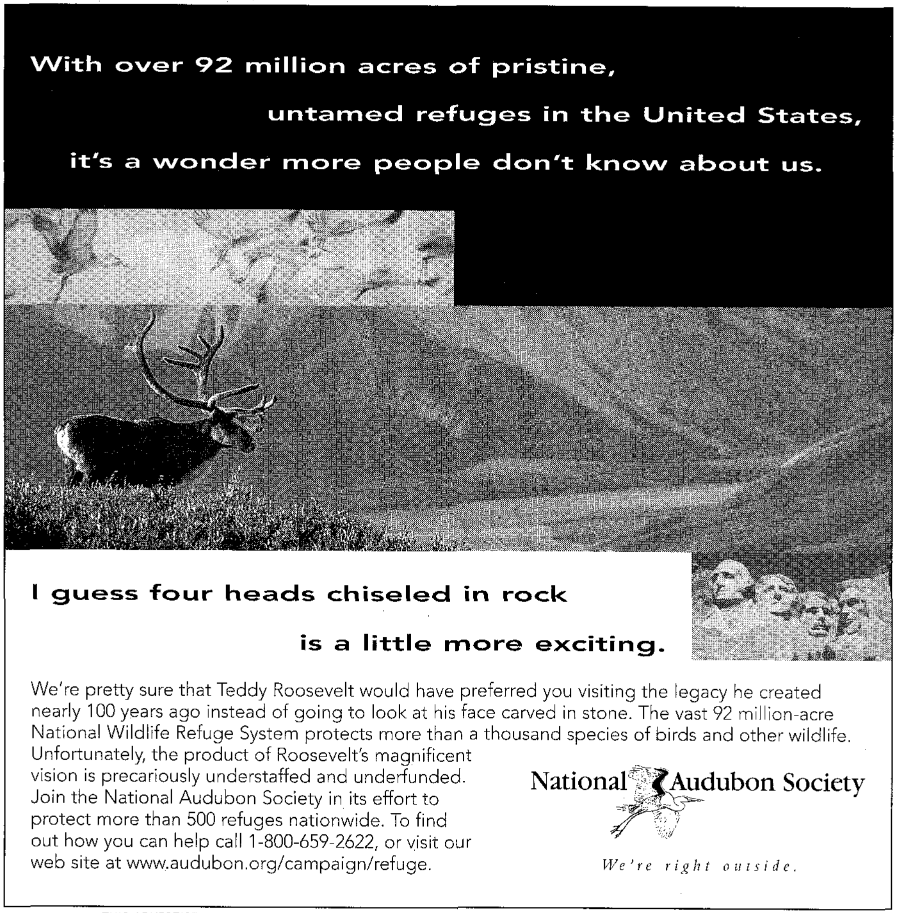
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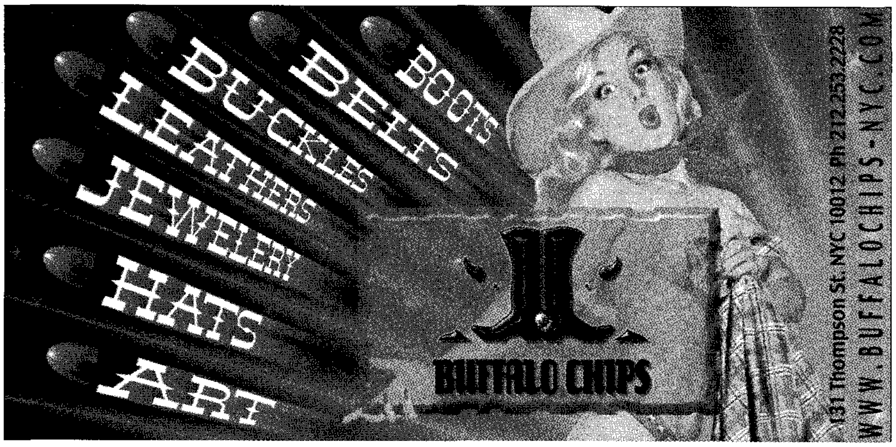
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pieces are (not surprisingly) far-out, many are extremely wearable and very well designed. At $100–$1,000 a pop, one could end up with the work of some future design superstar. *Parsons School of Design, 560 Seventh Ave., at 40th St., fifth floor (229-8966); cash only; Wed. 11–4; 4/29.*

For the Future

WE KNOW IT'S A LITTLE PREMATURE TO BE thinking about your purchases for next fall, but if you're in a forward-planning state of mind, Shirin Cashmere's trunk show will feature its entire collection of luxury knitwear. Pay by cash or check and get a 10 percent discount off all purchases; customers can special-order pieces in specific colors and styles. *Shirin Cashmere, Regency Hotel, 540 Park Ave., near 61st Street, Suites 1420 and 1422 (759-4100, ext. 1420); Mon.–Fri. 10–6, weekend appointments possible; A.E., M.C., V.; 4/27–5/15.*

Little Italy

IF A TRIP TO A TUSCAN SPA IS NOT IN THE cards for the immediate future, we'll wager that the best next thing is a visit to the Terme di Saturnia on 57th Street. Two treatments—an oxygen-therapy facial and a seaweed wrap with a lymphatic-drainage massage—would usually cost $255; they're now $130. That's a pretty sweet deal for three hours of spa relaxation. *Terme di Saturnia at Studio 57 Skin & Body Care Spa, 57 W. 57th St., Suite 710 (758-6383); Tues.–Sat. 9:30–8; A.E., M.C., V.; 5/1–5/31.*

Fossil Watch

FOSSILGLASS—A SMALL DESIGN WHOLEsaler on Greenwich Street—specializes in handcrafted glassware reminiscent of beach glass and ancient artifacts. It's putting samples, one-of-a-kinds, and slightly imperfect models on sale: for example, serving bowl, retail $130, here $45 or less; sorbet dishes, retail $40, here $12–$14. *Fossilglass, 430 Greenwich St. (966-2798); Thurs. noon–7, Fri. till 8, Sat. 11–6; cash only; 4/30–5/2.*

Into Leather

HÉLÈNE'S ALLIGATOR, CROCODILE, OSTRICH, and lizard handbags and accessories are being flown in from Boca Raton for this annual sale. Usually retailing for $650–$4,000, they're $350–$2,000 here. *Wales Hotel, 1295 Madison Ave., near 92nd St. (876-6000); A.E., checks; Mon.–Tues. 10–5:30; 5/4–5/5.* ■

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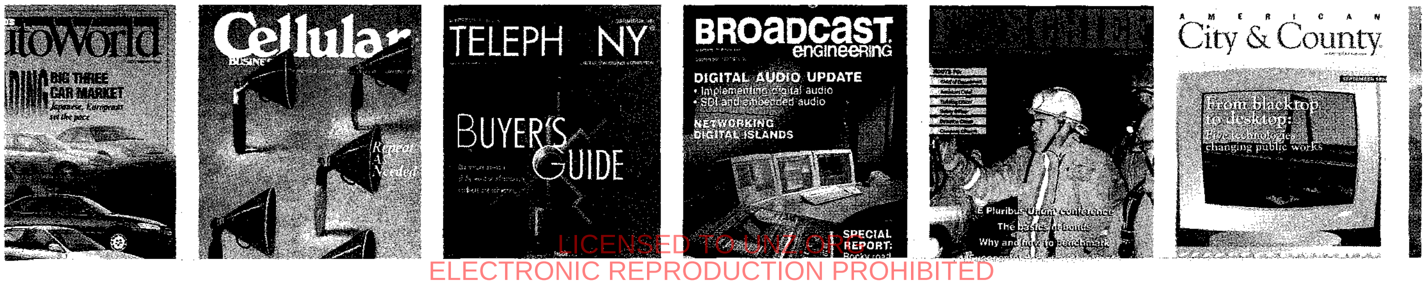
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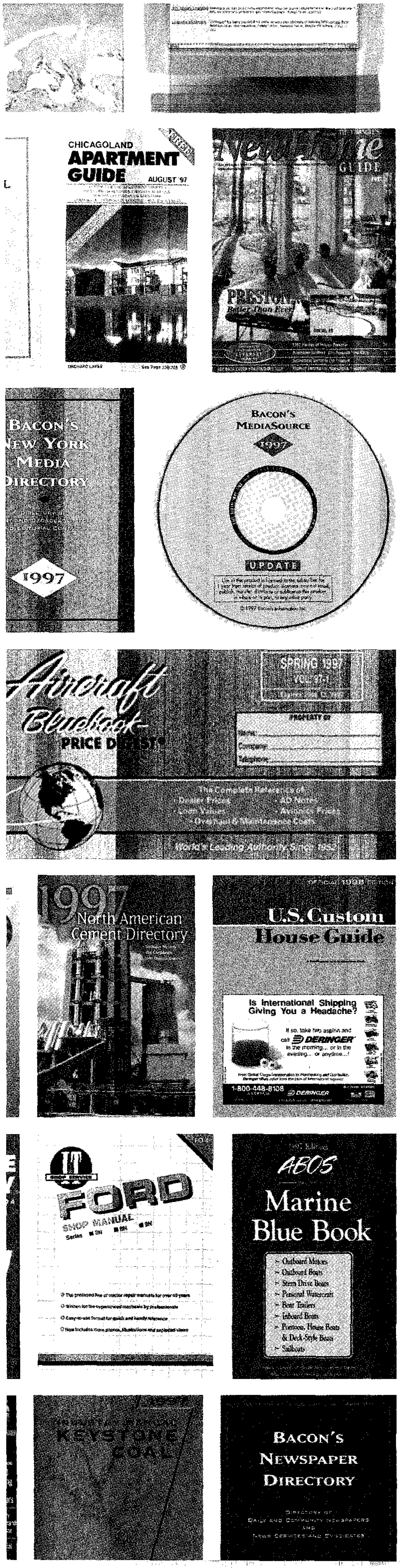
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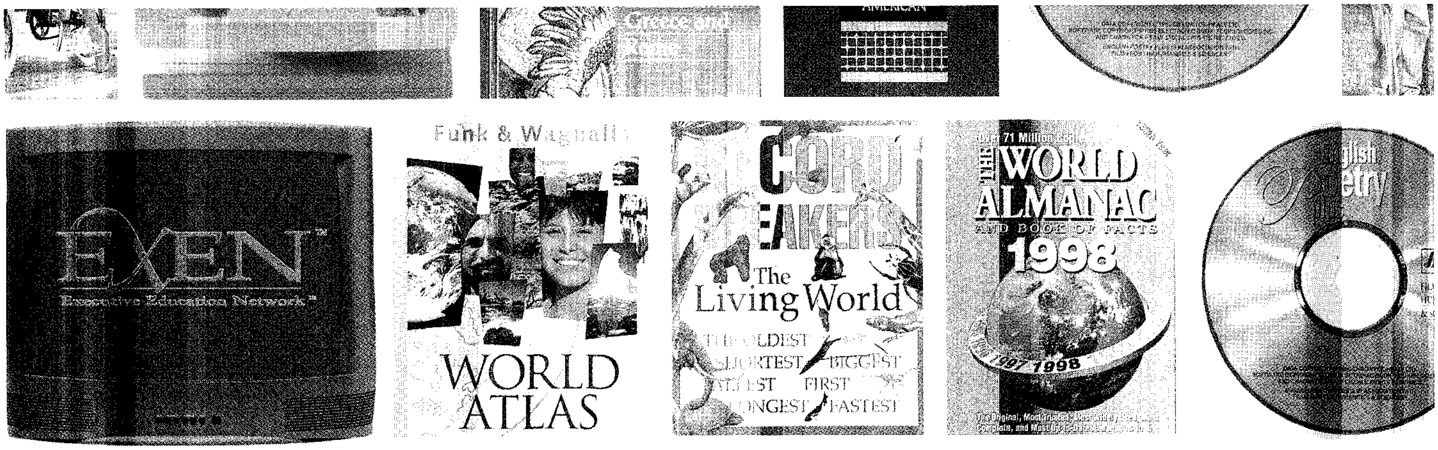
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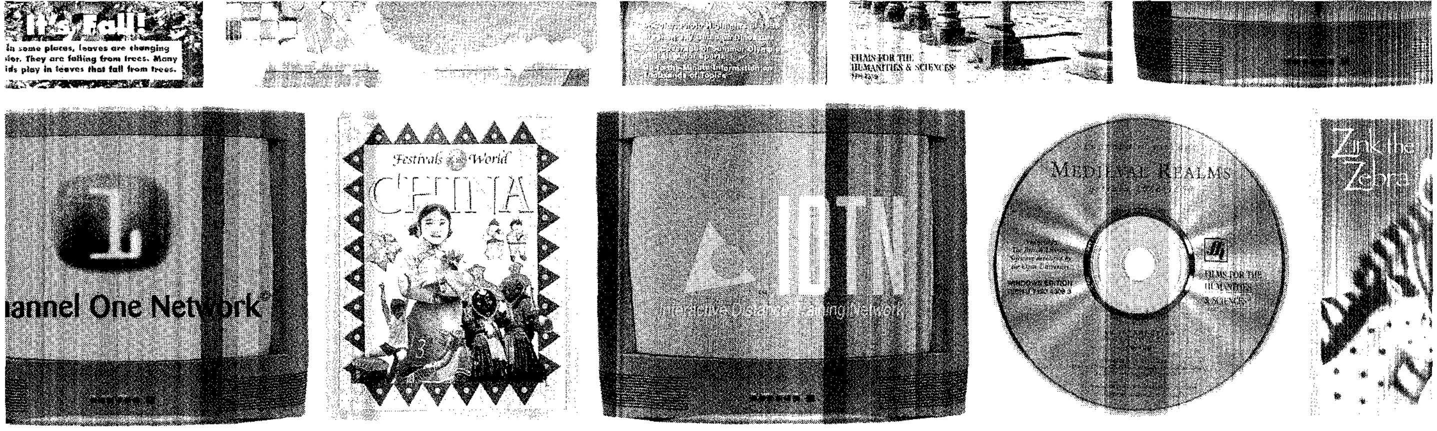
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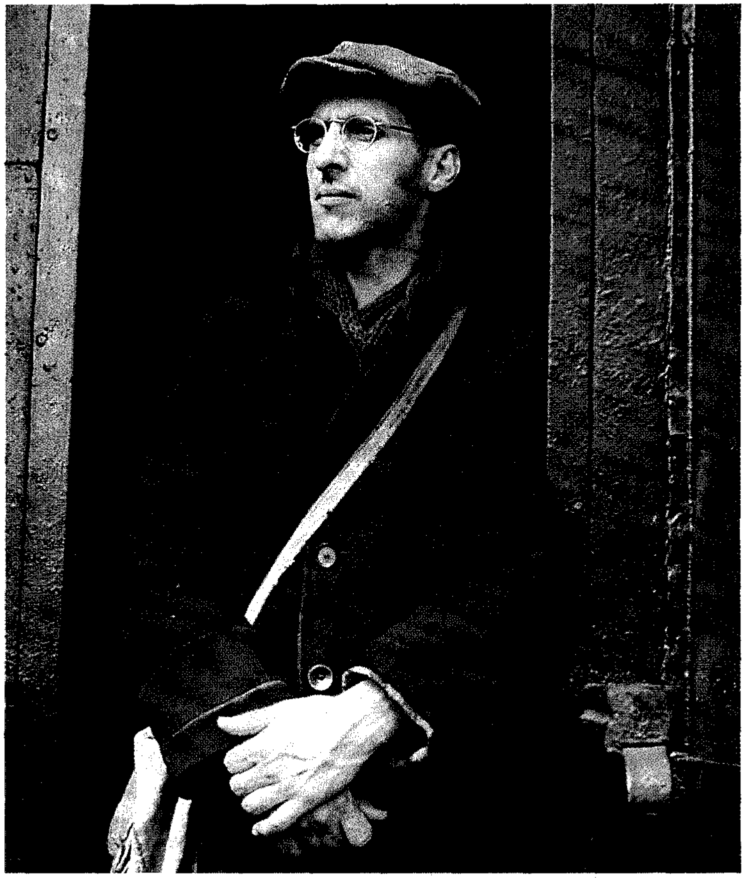
MOVIES DAVID DENBY

Hell's Cadenza

The music-filled story of a man's sensual reawakening after the war, 'The Truce' is adapted from Primo Levi's second Holocaust memoir.

THERE IS A SUBLIME MOMENT IN **The Truce,** Francesco Rosi's awkward but moving epic about the chaotic aftermath of World War II. At the beginning of the movie, Primo Levi (John Turturro), a young Italian chemist, has been left behind in Auschwitz by the Germans. Through sheer luck, Levi has survived. He is later to become a superb writer—the outstanding memoirist of the Holocaust—but in the winter and spring of 1945, he cannot make his way home from Poland. He travels with Italian and Greek fellow survivors—a ragtag group of the larcenous and the merely fortunate—through a European civilization that has simply disappeared. In Poland and Russia, dazed German prisoners wander about or try to work in a desultory way; the black market rules everything; the victorious Red Army provides gentle but chaotic administration. Instead of sending the group south, the Russians put the former camp inmates on trains heading north toward Minsk. After a bit, the rail lines, torn up by the war, give out, and Levi and his friends wander across the countryside and settle beside a beautiful lake. For a while they are content just to sit. Then comes the happy moment: One of their group puts together a ramshackle orchestra, and as he begins to conduct Vivaldi, a gaggle of geese, as if on cue, indignantly walk away from the strange new sound. *The Truce,* which is based on Levi's second book, is about the reawakening of the senses, the resurrection of humanity in men and women consigned to death. The survivors reacquaint themselves with food and sleep (but never a sleep without nightmare—Levi committed suicide 42 years later, in 1987); then they take up sensual pleasures of every kind. When the geese magically bestir themselves in response to music, both art and nature spring to life at once.

Francesco Rosi, now 76, is the last remaining genius of the Italian neorealist movement. Though Rosi has often worked on a large canvas (earlier in his career, he made celebrated movies about the Mafia and political corruption), he is perhaps best known here for the intimate social drama *Three Brothers* and the superb movie version of Bizet's *Carmen.* In *The Truce,* Rosi is working under tremendous constraints. He has to create a peculiar moment of disorder, a moment when civilization exists only through its half-remembered echoes, its scattered fragments. *The Truce* is set in transit camps and in makeshift medical centers, in trains and on the road, and the spectacle is modest rather than moving. Rosi captures the oddity of people rushing to and fro without any clear sense of what to do with themselves. Shyly, tentatively, the shattered camp survivors and the exhausted Russians reach for sex and pleasure. The movie is a series of strange, anomalous moments; it's an epic of gestures and uncompleted acts.



Sic transit: **John Turturro as Levi in Francesco Rosi's post-Auschwitz film** ***The Truce.***

Photograph by Piero Marsili Libelli/Miramax Films.

There are other difficulties. How do you shoot a post-Holocaust film? At the beginning, at Auschwitz, four horsemen approach the camp out of the mist and white snow. It is the quartet of young Soviet soldiers who led the Red Army into the undefended camp in January 1945. The white-on-white image is almost abstract, like something out of *Fargo*—the soldiers don't appear to be on a road but seem merely suspended in white. In such shots, the great cinematographer Pasqualino De Santis comes close to aestheticizing the concentration camp. It is a sin, but a forgivable sin, I suppose—the camp scenes themselves are shot in tones of the richest gray, as if De Santis, even in *this* place, could not resist beauty. Later on, however, the lusciousness doesn't require apology—beauty is one of the things that coaxes the ex-inmates back to life. At the transit camp, a Russian soldier, sword slicing the air, entertains the survivors with a very balletic tap to Irving Berlin's "Cheek to Cheek." When they are wandering about, Levi and his friends encounter some little Fragonard babies playing naked in the sunshine.

It's a film of great images, not a dramatic work. Levi's *The Truce* (known in its American edition as *The Reawakening*) is an account of adventure and vaga-

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bondage, and by its very nature the material is anecdotal. Men and women encountered on the road or in a transit camp loom up before the author, powerful in their deviousness and charm, and then abruptly disappear in pursuit of their own destiny. The movie repeats this fragmentary construction. There is only Levi himself to hold it together, and Levi is a quiet and guarded young man—an observer, a writer in the making.

Turturro has a long, lean face, liquid eyes, and a mouth drawn small and tight in fear. He watches and holds himself in. In the early scenes of the movie, he is so clenched, so alarmed by his survival, he appears ready to ward off a blow from a camp guard. He is a child with his face at the candy-shop window, staring and staring, longing to break through to people. Levi is not a physically courageous man, but the pride is there, even a haughty sense of his own worth, and when pushed, he will assert himself and speak with great firmness of principle—it is the future interpreter of the Holocaust's depredations who speaks. Turturro gives a sincere, entirely committed performance as Levi. It is, unfortunately, a rather limited piece of acting. We know why he's doing what he's doing, but we may think he still needs to find some way of giving the character more life and variety. As a writer, Primo Levi has his own kind of gentle vivacity; Turturro hasn't found a way of getting that side of Levi into the performance. One feels he is attempting to hold our attention by sheer force of will, by an exercise of high-mindedness rather than imagination.

Levi is attracted to people bolder than himself—such as the self-sufficient tough guy known as "The Greek," a tremendous scoundrel and operator played by the great Yugoslavian actor Rade Serbedzija (from *Before the Rain* and *The Saint*). Serbedzija, a big, humorous man with a beautiful beard and flashing eyes, speaks in three or four languages at once, and he's dazzling in any language. He looks at Turturro's Levi with contempt. The Greek, we are to understand, has a low-minded and mercenary talent: He has a genius for survival. For a while, as if chosen by God, he takes care of the hapless Levi, who will, in the end, turn out to be survival's true genius. *The Truce* is not as exciting as other epics, but it preserves the memory of a man who discovered himself at the moment of Europe's dissolution and in his quiet way triumphed over the worst the century had to offer.

D. H. LAWRENCE, DESCRIBING HIS OWN PRACtice, wrote in a letter to a friend that "the old stable ego" in fictional characters was gone, replaced by an ego that goes through "allotropic states"—that is, variations so striking that the reader has some difficulty in recognizing that the character is, in fact, a single individual. I thought of this remark when watching Robert Downey Jr.'s performance in James Toback's **Two Girls and a Guy,** because Downey puts out a furious whirlwind of moods, denials, reversals, reinventions, all in the space of a couple of hours (the movie takes place in real time), and his triumph and his tragedy are that he is many persons inside one person.

At the beginning of *Two Girls and a Guy,* two young women (Heather Graham and Natasha Gregson Wagner) are waiting outside a SoHo loft for what turns out to be the same man. Each thinks she is the exclusive girlfriend of the young actor Blake (Downey), and each has been lied to. The two women break into Blake's loft and wait for him. Toback, who a decade ago made *The Pick-Up Artist,* also with Downey, shot the movie very cheaply and quickly (in eleven days), and some of the sound has the hollow tones of post-dubbing. Trying for revelation, Toback has moved in a little too close to his actresses and forced them to run through their lines under great pressure. For a while, the movie feels rushed and cramped. But when Downey enters, the camera backs off, and Downey fills the loft with his personality. Blake doesn't know the women are there, and as he enters, perfectly happy, he sings "Cum Sancto Spiritu" from Vivaldi's *Gloria,* jumping from the tenor to the bass line, then he telephones each woman and his mother and leaves messages for everyone. He sits down at the piano and sings a torch song.

The women come out of hiding, jump all over him, and he lies and retreats. His defense is that he's telling an actor's truth in sexual relationships—he can be whatever he needs to be; therefore, he means what he says when he tells each woman that he loves her. This is nonsense, of course, but it's very revealing of Downey himself, for this is the same Robert Downey who is both a highly creative actor and a heroin addict passing in and out of rehab and jail. Downey can speak soberly of his guilt in court and jokingly of his impending doom to a friend. His identity isn't stable enough to allow him to claim life for himself. In the movie, he glares at himself in a mirror, pulling his features into a grotesque mask, and runs through Hamlet's confrontation with his mother. It appears to be Toback's idea that Blake is too much his mother's son to love any woman, but the psychologizing and the back-and-forth arguments about monogamy and betrayal are less interesting than Downey's moment-by-moment destruction and re-creation of himself. *Two Girls and a Guy* isn't a satisfying movie, but Downey is alarmingly brilliant in it—a man locked in torment who can't find the way out. Let's pray this isn't one of his last performances. ■

David Denby's 1998 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com,** *along with movie news, a schedule of upcoming openings, and more.*

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MARCH 12, 1998
The Washington Post

BY SHARON WALSH
Washington Post Staff Writer

NEW YORK- Business is booming for Denise Thomas, a cosmetic surgery consultant who takes clients doctor-shopping for just the right surgeon to laser away wrinkles, get rid of droopy eyelids, suction out fat, or tighten up that turkey gobbler neck.

Her appointment book contains the names of Wall Street vice presidents, physicians, lawyers, graphic artists and museum curators who believe they need, as well as want, a youthful, vigorous appearance. Many of them are from the army of 76 million baby boomers marching reluctantly through middle age and are willing to endure expensive and painful procedures to look younger.

Plastic surgery, at one time the province of the rich and famous, has become the refuge of the merely middle class and the barely old. While widespread acceptance of the nip and tuck has been growing over the last decade, its use has mushroomed into a climate of rising disposable income and the baby boomers' fear of aging. Once the goal was to look more beautiful. Now, experts say, it is to stay young-looking.

"A lot of the baby boomers have the money and they are fighting like hell to stay young, especially the men." Thomas said. "It's been a very big year. A wonderful year. And I think next year will be even better."

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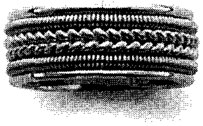

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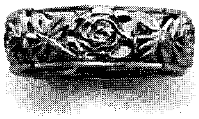

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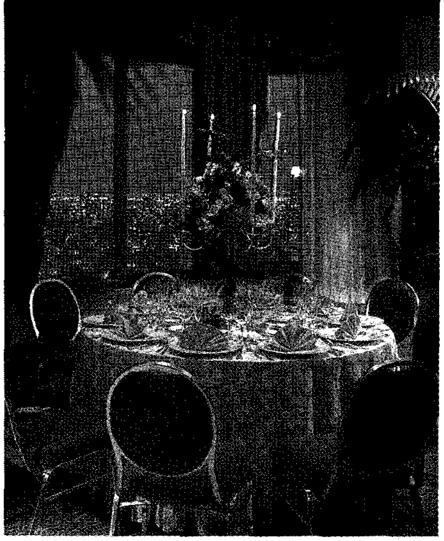

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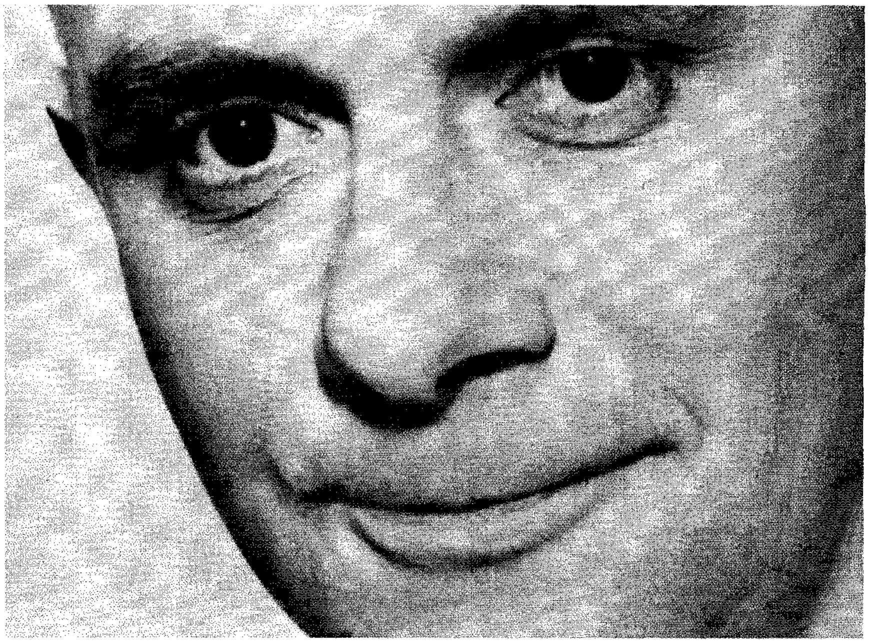
WALTER KIRN

Boyish Smarm

There's wit and good writing aplenty in Nick Hornby's 'About a Boy.' But the plot is a well-worn homily of emotional growth.

About a Boy
BY NICK HORNBY
Penguin; 320 pages; $22.95

WHEN THE YOUNG MALE PROTAGONIST IN A novel lives by himself, resisting deep human attachments, doting on his expensive up-to-the minute hairstyle, contempo wardrobe, and encyclopedic music collection, you can bet money that the fix is in: He's going to get his comeuppance before long, invariably in the form of an unexpected relationship that will crack his carefree detachment like an egg. In the same way the movies don't like single women who keep to themselves, wear glasses, and read books—not until they let down their hair and swing, that is, going from ugly duckling to dazzling swan in the mandatory mythic makeover—literature doesn't like superficial bachelors, except as they offer the raw material for turning out rounded, caring human beings, If popular art has an iron law, it's this: Unattached women need romance to complete them, and unattached men need emotional commitments.



Nick Hornby, bard of male romantic dysfunction: In the end, his hero gets a life.

Photograph by Tessa Hallman.

About a Boy, the second novel by young British writer Nick Hornby (his first, *High Fidelity,* was also a comedy of maturation), is actually about a man: a man, it's implied, who'd better grow up fast or face the slow and lonely psychic decline that our culture assumes is the fate of footloose males. (Until this fixed idea loosens: Good luck, gay rights.) Will is a Londoner, and at 36—roughly the year of spiritual decision in contemporary fiction—he has no family, no close friends, no worries, and, thanks to a healthy royalty stream from a cutesy Christmas song written by his late father, no need to work. He's a free urban agent, disposable income incarnate. The closest he comes to self-scrutiny is taking personality tests in glossy magazines: ". . . and if Will had anything approaching an ethical belief, it was that lying about yourself in questionnaires was utterly wrong."

Hornby is a comic traditionalist but with added bounce and spin. He sets up conventional expectations but pays them off with pastel funny money. When Will invents a fictitious son so he can join a club for single parents, reasoning that lonely women with kids can't afford to be picky about men—particularly men who've proven themselves as fathers—what springs to mind is every other episode of *Men Behaving Badly,* yet Hornby manages to freshen the gag, to make it more than a sitcom juggling act. As Will's white lies predictably compound themselves and his made-up son sprouts a made-up family tree, the issue becomes Will's capacity for optimistic self-delusion, not just his agility as a con man. "Once, years ago, when he was a kid, he told a school friend (having first ascertained that his friend was not a C. S. Lewis fan) that it was possible to walk through the back of his wardrobe into a different world, and invited him round to explore. . . . The thing was, he could still remember feeling genuinely hopeful, right up until the last minute: Maybe there will be something there, he had thought, maybe I won't lose face."

No mere heartless libertine willing to tell a woman anything to get her into bed, Will is something more subtle, and more perniciously modern: a serial self-inventor. Having managed to digitize his soul, he can rearrange his psychic pixels at will. He doesn't wear masks—there's nothing to wear them on. In fact, he's not even dishonest in the usual sense, since he has no inner truth to hide. (A certain American president comes to mind.) And though Hornby is bound by the popular novelist's code to disapprove of Will's condition and pour cold water over him to cure it, one senses that he really doesn't want to, which is what makes the book a guilty pleasure and not just another sweet, life-affirming romp. Hornby half admires Will's digital soul, treating it as a wonder of evolution even as he dutifully deplores it. He sings the body electronic, but in an undertone.

The agent of Will's emotional redemption is a wise little boy named Marcus with a stock comic motivation of his own: he wants to trap a man for Mom. Mom is Fiona, an unhip aging hippie, all vegetarianism and natural fibers, who forces Marcus to listen to Joni Mitchell albums and wear homely loafers instead of flashy sneakers. Will meets her through the single-parents group, and he's horrified by her sincerity. To Will, Fiona's soulful earth-mother parenting—she sings sad songs with her eyes closed in front of Marcus—amounts to child abuse. Kids are vulnerable enough when they're born, Will feels; to tenderize them further is inexcusable.

Modernizing Marcus becomes Will's mission. Meanwhile, Marcus sensitizes Will. It's a formula symbiosis that even Hornby can't mold into new shapes. The gods of musical-comedy storytelling can only be toyed with, not finally defied, and the rest of the book just fills in the details of the old *Pygmalion* switcheroo. Will buys Marcus a Nirvana album and outfits him with new Adidas, enabling him to finally walk tall. Marcus teaches Will empathy and kindness, enabling him to feel, to fall in love. And the burden of having to carry all this corn makes Hornby's sentences—normally lean and flexible and resilient—buckle at the knees: "Will couldn't recall ever having been caught up in this sort of messy, sprawling chaotic web before; it was almost as if he had been given a glimpse of what it was like to be human."

Hornby is a fine writer, swift and pointed, with a lighter, more mischievous heart than he lets on and more sympathy for the devil than he admits to, but he still left me feeling that there's something slightly fraudulent about the maturity drama as a form these days. It's all a bit too open-and-shut, too smug and deterministic somehow, this business of going from cold to warm, hard to soft, self-centered to sensitive. All the questions that seem, in life, to grow vaguer and more nuanced by the day—do people really improve and grow, or do they just genetically unfold? Is it better to stand on principle or swerve with circumstance? Is bad behavior a choice or a disease?—are answered in this sort of novel before they're even asked. The prescription is simple: Open up. Bond. Reach out. Turn off your TV and get a life. Ah, but what kind of life? And at what price? In far too many novels these days, even some quite good ones, it's as if we're just supposed to know. ■

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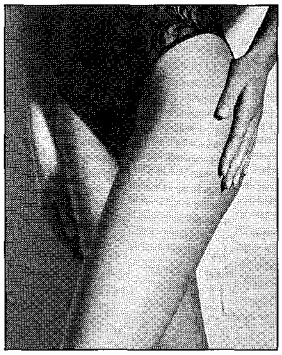

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JOHN SIMON

Bed, Bathos, and Beyond

The labored 'Herbal Bed' is a high-minded historical drama about Shakespeare's daughter; are drama awards really booby prizes?

WHAT EXACTLY IS A WORTHY PLAY? A WORTHY play—a genre unto itself—depends on a worthy subject. For example, the doomed love of Abélard and Héloïse, the exploitation of the Eskimos, some hideous historical case of racial or religious prejudice, Anne Frank, any lawsuit won or lost by Clarence Darrow, any dramatization of Charles Dickens. It no longer needs to be written in verse or display archaic diction. Importation from Europe is a plus; and the play should feature either British or Central European accents, regardless of locale.

Shakespeare, as we know, bequeathed to his wife his second-best bed. Even that must have been better than **The Herbal Bed,** which the British playwright Peter Whelan has bestowed on Shakespeare's elder daughter, Susanna. In 1613, when she was 30 and six years married to the noted Stratford physician John Hall, a rich young roisterer named Jack Lane, whom she had rejected, drunkenly proclaimed that she had been unfaithful with a local haberdasher, Rafe Smith. She brought a charge of defamation against Lane in the diocesan court at Worcester Cathedral, and, Lane not having shown up, she won her case. It was adjudicated by Bishop Parry's vicar, Goche, a Puritan, as was Doctor Hall, an otherwise enlightened fellow. That's about all we know.

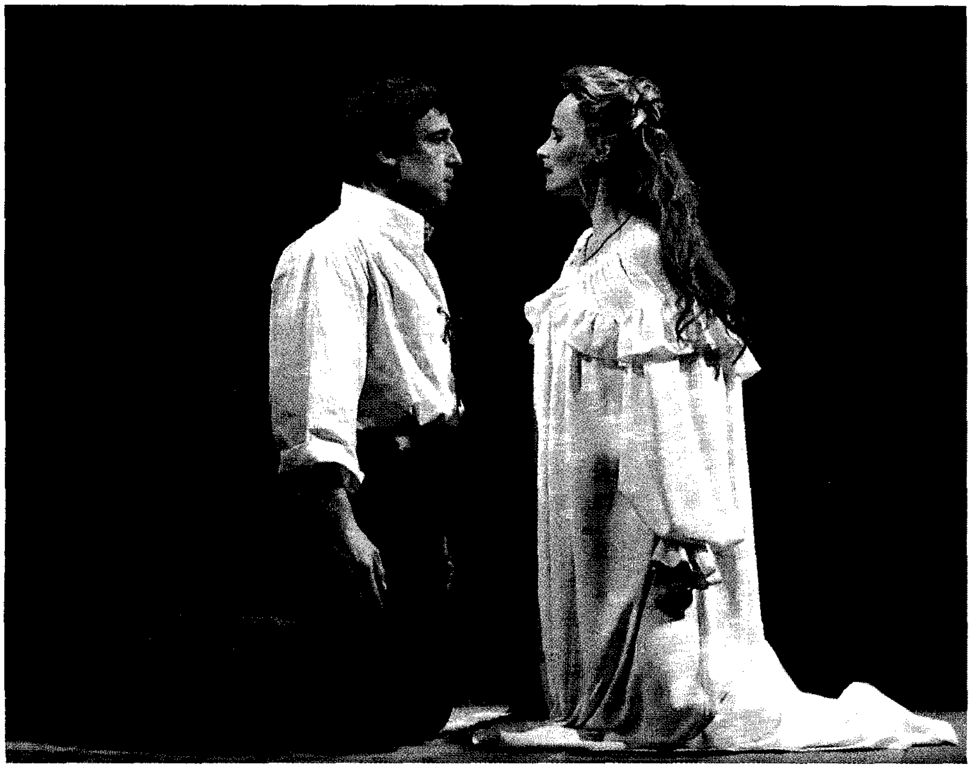
Out of this, Whelan has constructed a play with a rather limp beginning, a mildly interesting middle, and an indifferent conclusion. It is sensibly written in modern English, but the American accents of most of the cast don't help the atmosphere. David Jenkins's scenery—Dr. Hall's lush garden full of medicinal herbs, and one arch of Worcester Cathedral—is probably the best scant money can buy. But the whole enterprise, with its frequent allusions to Susanna's father, teasingly about to show up in the end, drowns in worthiness.

"Witty above her sexe," reads Susanna's Stratford epigraph, and "Something of Shakespeare was in that." But the play does not give her much of a chance to exhibit her wit, except as a liar, and even in that, her (fictitious) maid, Hester, eventually surpasses her. Susanna demonstrates medical skills, at least, and the restlessness of a gifted woman in a repressively patriarchal society. Her husband, John Hall, is decent and dull, which Tuck Milligan doesn't mitigate: Rafe, the would-be lover, is decent and torn, to which Armand Schultz adds wooden; Trent Dawson plays Lane as a standard scapegrace.

Their lack of luster places an undue burden on Laila Robins's Susanna. Miss Robins, as I have never tired of saying, is one of our few actresses to combine classiness, sexiness, and manifest intelligence with genuine talent, yet she has been shockingly underused. Here, in a fairly colorless part and an unflattering hair color, she pushes a bit hard but is still a pleasure to see and hear. As Hester, Amelia Campbell is slow to get started but rises to a lively climax. Best support comes from the Goche of Simon Jones, a bravura villain in the Basil Rathbone–and–Henry Daniell tradition. His ability to swivel an accusing finger in slow motion and coat a suspicion-laden "Ah!" with malign glee is inspired hokum.

Unfortunately, there is also the Bishop of Herb Foster, who might as well have been cast for his herbal name. His presence in a show is like that in a kitchen of a very pungent cheese, before which all other scents fall silent. Michael Attenborough, who staged the successful Royal Shakespeare Company production, again directs, without much perceptible help or harm.

Soporific sex: Armand Schultz and Laila Robins in *The Herbal Bed.*



Photograph by Henry Grossman.

ALL SHOWBIZ AWARDS—TONYS, OSCARS, etc.—are worthless from top to bottom, if there is a bottom. Take one ludicrous example: the Best Play category at the recent Lucille Lortel Awards. In a year that yielded some very good Off Broadway plays (Broadway is ineligible), the two front-runners in several rounds of voting kept being **Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde,** written and directed by Moisés Kaufman, and **The Beauty Queen of Leenane,** by Martin McDonagh, which opened Off Broadway but, thanks to near-unanimous raves, is reopening on Broadway. The latter is a barely mediocre play by a self-inflated young whippersnapper in a splendid production; the former is not even a play, only a transcript.

There were at least three plays that, in my view, deserved to be winners: Tina Howe's *Pride's Crossing,* Jeffrey Hatcher's *Scotland Road,* and Warren Leight's *Side Man,* all blithely ignored by the voting critics and pseudo critics. Why weren't they even in the running? *Pride's Crossing* (I would guess) because reviewers were so (rightly) awestruck by Cherry Jones's dazzling performance that they were blind to the mature, probing, and poetic writing, especially as it dealt with Boston Brahmins, a near-extinct Wasp species beyond the scope of New York's scribes.

Scotland Road was a challenging fantasy about a possible but unlikely survivor of the *Titanic* and a fanatical young man hell-bent on exposing her. Unluckily, the play opened at a time when that monster movie *Titanic* cast its thick shadow on a delicate, somewhat wispy but riveting, superbly mounted piece. *Side Man,* a touching, funny, intensely human comedy-drama about the rootless lives of itinerant jazz musicians and their hapless families, played at CSC, a theater that has so steadily produced abominations that some of the voters probably didn't even catch it.

Gross Indecency is a crassly self-serving attempt by a no-talent to cash in on Oscar Wilde's genius. Kaufman essentially copied out the transcripts of Wilde's trials, plus a few other events and dialogues recorded in various Wilde biographies. To show off his erudition, he had extras in the orchestra pit hold up the books and other documents he pillaged, while utterly untalented, linguistically and physically unsuited histrions onstage mouthed and camped up a great, tragic tale. The production itself was unspeakably shoddy technically. Still, if you knew little about Wilde and were struck by his wit and humanity, or if you knew nothing about theater and would settle for a cheesily theatricalized undergraduate thesis, or if you were homosexual and felt that anything about Wilde served the cause, you might have voted for *Gross Indecency.*

The Beauty Queen of Leenane is the work of an immature playwright full of every kind of derivativeness, manipulativeness, and shtick. It was, however, expertly acted and directed, though to any real critic, this would be separable from writerly merit. And so *Indecency* and *Leenane,* two dead ducks, ended up co-winners in a dead heat. In their undeservingness, at any rate, they are equals. ■

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ART MARK STEVENS

Lost in Space

At Dia, Richard Serra and Robert Irwin make art you can enter; a forgotten French sculptor enlivens the Met.

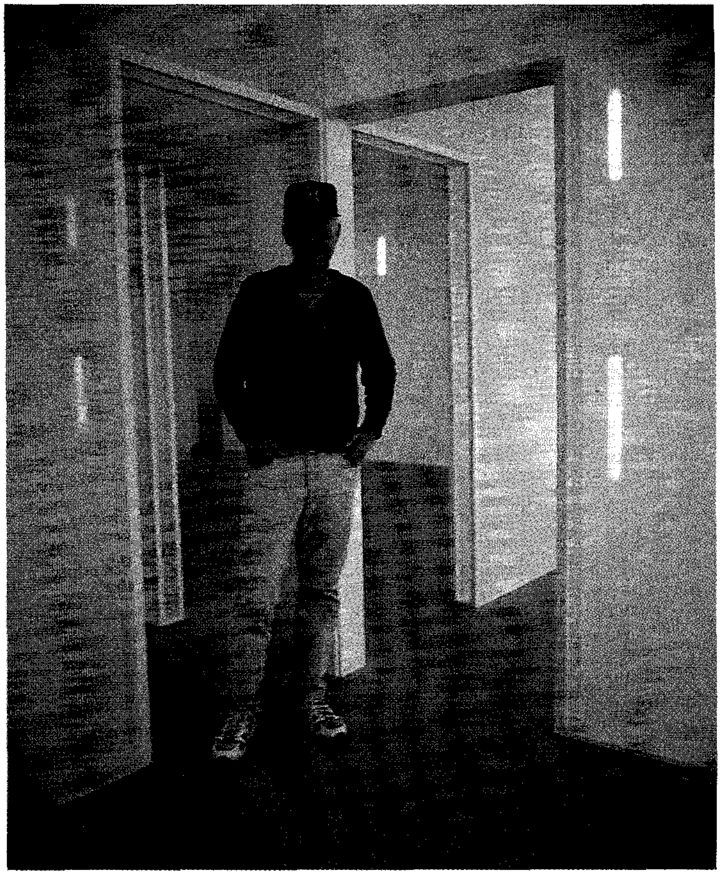
FOR MANY ARTISTS TODAY, A PAINTING THAT hangs on the wall is too static, passive, and autonomous a creation to capture the kinetic character of modern life. Instead, their thinking goes, why not transform the actual space around a viewer, making the environment the form? Why not place the spectator within the frame? The Dia Center for the Arts is now exhibiting two "installations"—Robert Irwin's **Prologue: x18³,** which opened last week, and Richard Serra's **Torqued Ellipses,** which has been on display since last fall—that not only are individually significant but also demonstrate the remarkable range of expression that can be found in such works. Without too much exaggeration, you could say that Irwin provides a glimpse of heaven and Serra a glimpse of hell.

Irwin, a Californian who will also have a show at PaceWildenstein in May, typically uses a subtle palette of natural light in his installations. For *Prologue: x18³*, he has created eighteen interconnected rooms using semi-transparent scrims as walls. At the north and south ends, he has chosen to let natural light flow into the piece. In each room, however, he has also placed one vertical line of fluorescent light; the fluorescence itself contains carefully modulated white, blue, and gray tones. As you look through the walls of scrim into the interior, these vertical lines of light appear to repeat themselves endlessly, as if you were staring into a mirrored space. Other sight lines do something similar, establishing ongoing repetitive patterns as room upon room unfolds. The light deep within the piece looks as cool and soft as fog: Viewers walking about become ghostly figures in empty rooms, their tangible bodies transformed into shadows whenever they pass behind the scrims.

Irwin often works with subtle perceptual phenomena, but he never becomes simply an "Oh, wow" performer playing tricks on the eye. The perceptual in Irwin is also the philosophical—a way toward some deeper intimation about human existence. Here, the repeating rooms and lights convey the Zen-like sensation of a progressive emptying-out, a freeing of the mind from its habitual clutter. (Walking through *Prologue: x18³* is rather like being inside an Agnes Martin painting.) Bodies become lighter, walls porous. The geometry seems strict but not tyrannous. The spaces disorient the eye, but without that mazelike constriction or visual lockup of the endlessly mirrored space. For some reason, this peaceful work made me think of death—but a death I did not fear.

Like Irwin, Richard Serra also establishes a vivid environment. Although his massive works in rolled steel can be interesting in and of themselves, their power comes from what they do to the space we inhabit and walk through. His *Torqued Ellipses*—which is on display across the street from the main Dia building—consists of three huge elliptical forms tightly packed into what looks like a warehouse. The two closer to the door have a slit through which you can walk. Inside, there is an open space. The third, set toward the back, also has a cut through which you can enter. In this piece, however, you must walk down a cramped and winding passageway of curved wall before you finally come upon the open interior space.

Torqued Ellipses creates a space of unremitting anxiety. Like much of Serra's earlier art, these particular objects appear at once heavy and unstable, as if they could fall and crush the body. Their geometry does not reassure: We sense a mathematical basis for the de-



Space invader: Robert Irwin within his *Prologue: x18³*.

Photograph by R. Jerome Ferraro.

sign, but one that lies beyond our ken. The three pieces also convey a sensation of barely contained movement, as if the tension in their "torque" might suddenly snap open the ellipse, sending the ribbon of heavy steel flying wildly outward. As you walk about, the walls of steel—whose curvature is often unexpected—unbalance your sense of what's upright and vertical and standing. You may bump into the walls as you walk beside them. Serra also upends the conventions of inside and outside. The exteriors of these ellipses do not enfold an interior in a way that seems protective; the interiors, in turn, provide no sensation of refuge. Even the way Serra sites the three ellipses creates unease. They do not make a settled form together, as houses in a village do.

For all their differences, Irwin and Serra enliven great traditions. In the twentieth century, many artists before Serra have confronted the thrilling—but also oppressive—weight of industrial materials; they, too, have responded to the inhuman scales, frightening geometries, and spatial anxieties of modern existence. And many modern artists before Irwin have sought a way to escape this fearful imprisonment, suffusing geometry with light and recovering what the modern world forgets, obscures, or fails to see. The two shows should be seen together. Each strengthens the other by providing a sharp, abiding contrast.

ACCORDING TO THE GRAPEVINE, NOT MANY people are visiting the exhibition of **Augustin Pajou's** sculpture at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. An oversight typical of our period. Pajou (1730–1809) is little known today, but that is not why he fails to attract a crowd: The work of a Serra or an Irwin is much easier for the contemporary eye to appreciate than that of a French sculptor of the Enlightenment who depicts the celebrated figures of his era in marble and terra-cotta busts. Viewers today typically consider busts academic, boring, deadly; in a museum, they are what you walk past on the way to the Impressionists. In fact, Pajou's art sparkles with charm. Although the Met show includes important examples of his work in marble—these are often public commissions, such as a profound portrayal of Pascal—Pajou's terra-cotta portraits are what particularly delight the eye. They seems as lively as sketches; in his hands, terra-cotta becomes the human clay. You can see the humor in the epigrammatic eyes of an aging librettist; the spirited intelligence in the set of a young woman's head; the fleshy pride in the cheeks of an important bureaucrat. Francophiles in particular should not miss this show. These eighteenth-century people are alive. You can be a wit at their salon. ■

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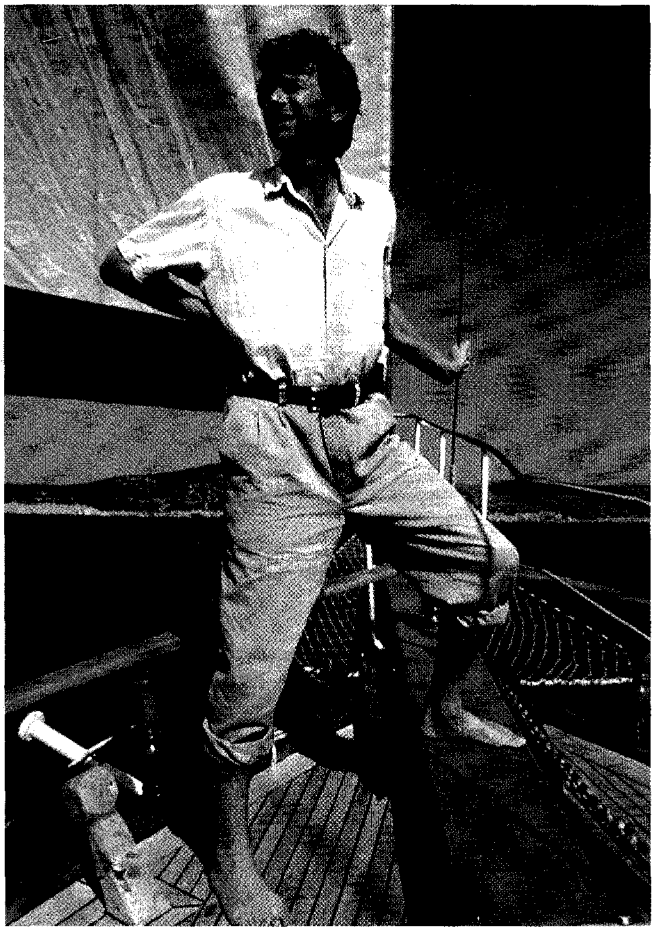
TELEVISION JOHN LEONARD

Smart Alex

Alexander the Great cut a 20,000-mile swath across Africa, Europe, and Asia—and all we got was this spirited travelogue.



Hail the conquering hero: Historian-archaeologist Michael Wood, on location for *In the Footsteps of Alexander the Great.*

BESIDES BEING SHORT, ALEXANDER THE GREAT had unresolved Oedipal problems, not to mention the edifice complex that caused him to master-build so many Alexandrias after his rambunctious Greeks had plowed under so many garden spots in the Near and Middle East. His father, Philip of Macedonia, had divorced his mother, Olympias, to marry somebody who *didn't* sleep with snakes. While there is no evidence to suggest Alex had a hand in Phil's assassination, the hotheaded son did get so tired of hearing from the older soldiers that he wasn't the man his father had been that one drunken night in Samarkand, he ran one of them through with a spear. This was several weeks before he also wasted his own court historian, Callisthenes, apparently for refusing to prostrate himself before the god-king. When Alex wasn't dancing naked with his noble companions around the tomb of Achilles in antique Troy, he was cross-dressing, with a tiara, as a Persian shah. This can't be what his tutor, Aristotle, had in mind. Callisthenes, after all, was Aristotle's nephew.

Such exceedingly rich material has been around for 2,300 years and one Richard Burton movie. Since Alex, like Jesus and Evita, died at age 33, we're just lucky Michael Wood got to him before Andrew Lloyd Webber did. Wood is the medieval historian, amateur archaeologist, and excitable roustabout who has dreamed up dozens of TV documentaries, mostly for the BBC. As if he had gone to the same school of peripatetic Greek philosophers to which Callisthenes himself belonged, he likes to hit the road—from Baghdad to the Congo. In order to follow **In the Footsteps of Alexander the Great** (Monday and Tuesday, May 4 and 5; 9 to 11 P.M.; Channel 13), he's had to hit that road for 20,000 miles, from northern Greece to Turkish Gordia to Lebanon; from Tyre to Gaza to the Nile; up over the Zagros mountains to Persepolis and down again to the shores of the Caspian Sea; from the steppes of Central Asia, across the Hindu Kush, into present-day Uzbekistan; by Khyber Pass to the Indus River—where the battle-weary Greeks were surprised to learn there was a lot more hostile territory out there than they'd bargained for. And so they made their god-king straggle back to Babylon, where he expired, in 323 B.C., from a combination of too much date wine, despair over the death of his noble companion and lover Hephaistion, and an arrow in his armpit that had punctured his lung.

Wood's genius, as he reads aloud from the pro-Alex Greek historian Arrian and the anti-Alex Roman historian Curtius, is in dragging us along with him over sometimes impossible terrain, in weather often wretched, at night when the Macedonians had to, pausing on occasion to dicker for supplies, or persuade Israeli border guards that the BBC is not political, or go underground to inspect Egyptian graffiti, or hitch a whirlybird ride out of Syria, or talk to a horse in Iran, or outflank bandits and dodge the Taliban advancing on Kabul. Thus, at the end of the twentieth century, we see into the Panhellenic past through Alexander's obstinate eyes, at the grunt level of his indefatigable infantry, from under the hooves of his lightning-quick cavalry, in the rainbow arc of his corps of archers, in the light of fires he set to burn down palaces.

But our ears are full of Wood's opinions on everything from flat-bottomed boats and altitude sickness to Zoroastrianism and war crimes. (Surrender to Alex, and he sets you up as his satrap, with the usual imperial perks. Resist, and he massacres the men and sells the women and children into slavery.) We hear about Roxanne (a marriage of convenience) and the Queen of the Amazons (who left without the child she wanted, because he couldn't get it up). Like the Athenians, Wood

Photograph by David Wallace.

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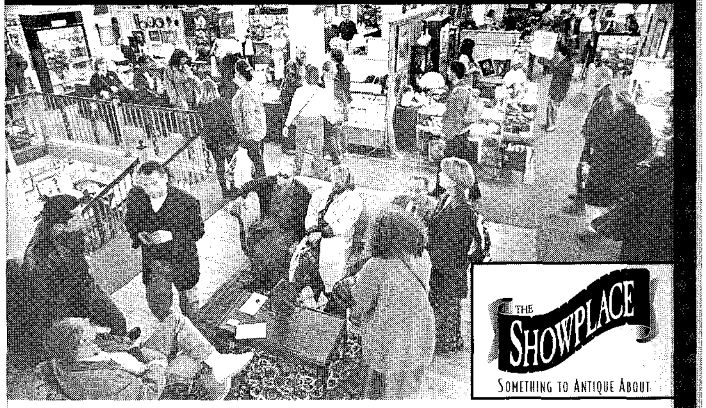

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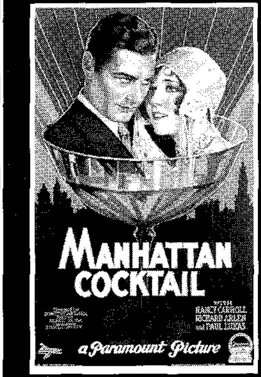
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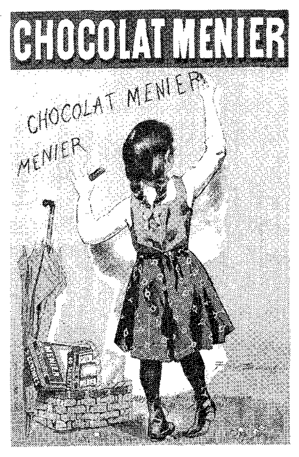

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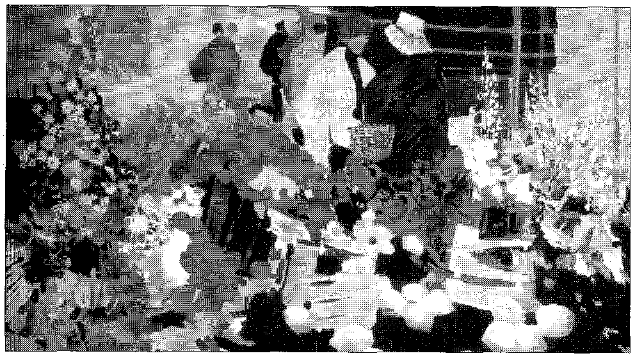

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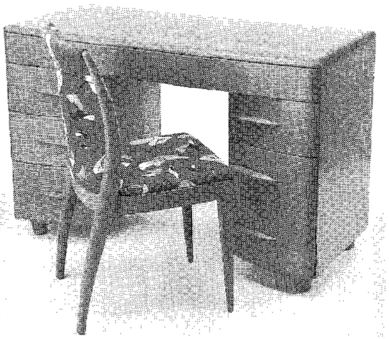

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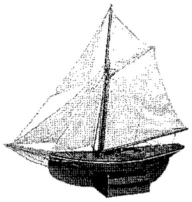

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seems inclined to blame some of Alex's excesses on Aristotle's pedagogy—hadn't the Golden Mean himself instructed his princely pupil that Greeks are supposed to rule barbarians?—although surely Aristotle, a proponent of city-states, had some doubts about imperium. (And also opposed the whole multicultural idea of mixed races and mixed marriages, unlike Alex, who is said to have been good for the Jews and other minorities.) Nevertheless, Wood concludes his dazzling mini-series with a poet's lament for "the loneliness and insanity of absolute power."

DESPITE MY DISDAIN LAST MAY FOR THE SLUGgish sweeps mini-series *The Last Don*, with Danny Aiello as Marlon Brando, the American public apparently loved it. And so Mario Puzo and CBS are back with a sequel, cleverly called **Mario Puzo's The Last Don II** (Sunday and Tuesday, May 3 and 5; 9 to 11 P.M.; CBS). To refresh your memory of the first six hours, all the absolutely powerful and absolutely corrupt Don Domenico Clericuzio (Aiello) ever wanted, in his big fancy house on Long Island, was for his favorite son to graduate from Columbia and become a biologist. But Palermo, Las Vegas, Hollywood, and drugs got in his way. So Danny made Joe Mantegna strangle Kirstie Alley's husband on their wedding night, which was why she spent the rest of the mini-series singing mad Italian arias in her slip. And Joe left town, first for Vegas, where he met and married showgirl Penelope Ann Miller, then to Palermo, to hide out from the heat. And Kirstie's son grew up to be Rory Cochrane, a sociopath. And Joe's son grew up to be Jason Gedrick, who was especially ambivalent about the family business after he met Darryl Hannah. And most of these people killed each other, which is more or less how Danny on his deathbed planned it.

Danny dies again in *The Last Don II;* and Joe comes back from the dead; and Jason comes back from Paris, after someone blows up his wife with a mail bomb; and Patsy Kensit moves in with him, pretending to therapize his autistic stepdaughter while spying undercover for the FBI; and James Wilder and Robert Wuhl plot to seize the family business and the family movie studio; and Kirstie has sex with a priest. Most of these people kill each other, which is more or less how Jason plans it before he leaves for Vegas, without Patsy. I will say, though I miss k.d. lang, that this sequel is a lot less lassitudinous than its predecessor, which relied entirely on Mantegna for its seizures of episodic energy and malevolence. Still, every time they crosscut, you know the body count's begun. And one has to wonder just how long the popular culture will remain nostalgic for the bygone days when every Hood was a Robin, singing Frank Sinatra. ■

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Here we go again—overnight, BondSt in NoHo is hotter than wasabi, the place to cross chopsticks with the neighborhood's parading mantises.

BondSt HAS HEAT IN ITS DNA. SIRED BY SEASONED impresarios from Indochine, Nobu, Republic, and "44" at the Royalton, it was blessed on its opening night by the pied pipers McNally, both Brian and Keith schmoozing at the same table. It fairly glows in its whitewashed townhouse between the clutzy clamor of Broadway and the scuz of Skid Row—target for unrepentant pilgrims as they careen in the night. Brand-new three weeks ago, with only its sub-pavement bar in action, the minimalist lounge is already on the circuit for savvy downtowners. We watch them stride in like an occupation army—giant totes and attachés proclaiming their burden of importance—to settle on polyestered banquettes defined by a series of black-painted slats like so many prison cells. We tilt and nearly tumble off unsteady tuffets that might dump us and our ice-cold sake on the floor were it not for Pilates-honed agility. Dragging a soft-shell-crab roll through driblets of wasabi yogurt, we are thrilled to recognize the signature crunch and spicy scrawls of a favorite sushi chef.

The modish rabble I expect will inevitably claim BondSt's duskily lit booths are still ironing their T-shirts and gelling their crew cuts at 7:30 on Friday night, so it's no trick for two of us to slip into the back room and claim prime seats at the counter—Hiroshi Nakahara's domain. He was massaging rice at the T Salon under the Guggenheim when I first fell for his saucy calligraphy and flirtatious smile. Like Brad Pitt, he seemed to savor some delicious secret (though probably it was only how much wasabi would melt my heart). Now he's the lead crooner in a trio, grunting Sid Caesaresque welcomes and farewells, spinning a spirited sushi shtick that never gets unduly raucous. "Omakase," I say, meaning let the chef decide, and with five swift slashes, a spill and a splat, we are chopsticking raw black sea bass tinged with ginger ponzu on small seeds with a crackle. "Soba risotto," he says, pleased with his newest cultural fusion. Usuzukuri, scallops of wild striped bass, dotted with red cod roe and floating in a slush of celery purée and obha vinaigrette—shiso sorbet. "It's a slushi," my companion cries.

I am curious, yellowtail: The chefs at BondSt play rambunctious tricks on classic themes.

A dab of caviar and a flutter of gold leaf top melting pink tuna belly, and the same regal extravagance crowns sea-urchin sushi with its shiso-leaf cravat. The indulgence dazzles; only foie gras is missing. Even a modest conceit like an inside-out sesame-paved shrimp roll comes on like a diva in a puddle of amazingly balanced curry sauce surrounded by swirls of intense balsamic vinaigrette. And seemingly unassuming chicken dumplings nested on a spotted persimmon leaf surprise with a hint of mint and the texture of their tofu-shred cummerbund. Now Hiroshi unties the orange-string binding of a fluke sushi in leafy bondage and hands us each a half. The subtle fish is infused with the wood savor of bamboo. But it is the exquisite complexity of the pressed mackerel under a coverlet of kelp with a girdle of cherry leaf that stuns us into uncharacteristic silence. Amazing what sensory time-bombs can be detonated by a quarter-ounce of flesh and a few grains of rice in a sushi master's hands.

I'll grant you, a purist could be offended by the rambunctious tricks Hiroshi plays on classic themes. But the basic commandments of sushi are honored here. The rice is warm. The fish is cool. The nori is crisp and toasty. An occasional hit of fresh-grated wasabi blows a hole in your head. Lightly battered tempura and a traditionally sedate dipping brew let you taste the shrimp, the asparagus, a crunch of carrot and lotus root. Delicate chunks of lobster tempura piled in the shell beside a stacked salad of frisée and lolla rossa with a Japanese-mustard dressing reflects Hiroshi's cross-pollination with the kitchen chef, Linda Rodriguez, French-technique-trained and a Nobu alumna. Hiroshi showed her soba seeds. She came up with the idea of risotto. Fried

Photographs by Kenneth Chen.

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celery leaves were her trick to pep up the shiso vinaigrette. And she hopes to persuade him to try a wasabi beurre blanc. "There's nothing I can't try," she says. "He's so interested in purées and emulsions, whatever it is, because it's French or Italian." The marriage works in grilled shrimp with smoked-trout butter, in crusty monkfish cutlets on a sensational spicy-and-sour salsa, and in grilled Chilean sea bass painted with miso.

By Saturday of the first week, the shadowy front dining room is jammed with night-blooming buds, a blur of black, a blare of mating calls that vie with loud techno on the sound system. Tearing through the menu, appetizers $6 to $12, entrées $17 to $22, our posse seeks sanctuary in the brighter, slightly more tranquil annex, where the techno twang is somewhat softer and we can watch Hiroshi and his bouncy backups strut and strain to keep a tidal wave of sushi moving. Relays of owners soothe the snarls of traffic and supervise the serving crew—on long legs in slit-to-there black slip dresses, rather difficult to distinguish from distaff guests. We must have a reprise of our favorites, plus tremulously fresh yellowtail nuzzled against a hillock of ice and sea urchin again, this time as sashimi—with caviar and gold leaf on a crisp. Smartly citric soups are equally exhilarating. The spiced blue crab has a lemongrass kick and the truffle-and-clam dobin mushi poured into a porcelain thimble gets a last-minute squeeze of calamanci, a lime as big as a cherry.

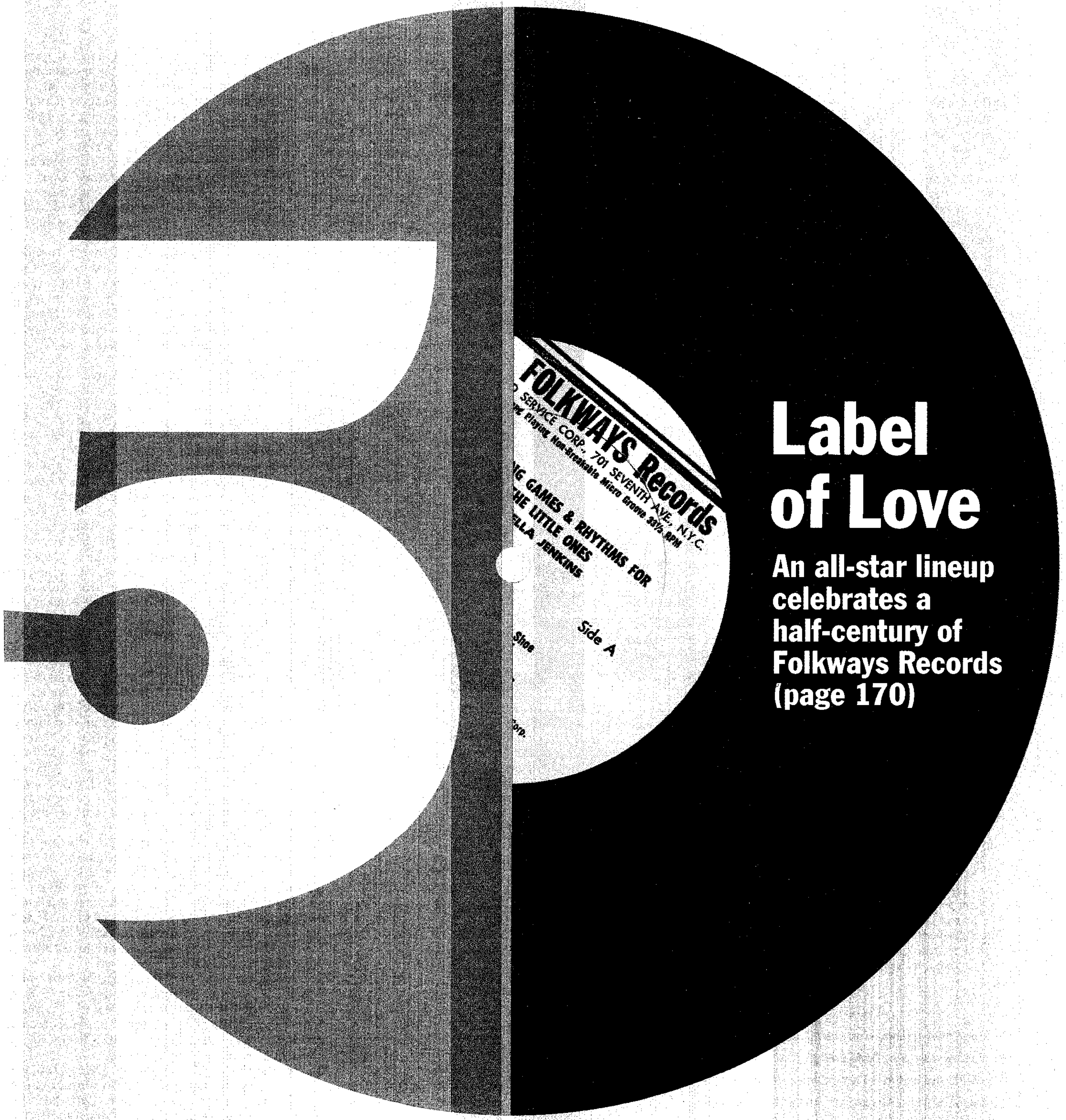
The crush is too much for this brand-new kitchen, stretching the recess between cold and hot appetizers rather painfully. But even without the delay, I find the clarion intensity of Hiroshi's jazz to be a tough act to follow. Except for the beautifully cooked sea bass and fresh-just-wilted spinach, all the entrées—lamb chops, slivers of steak, expertly cooked chicken—seem too rich. Still musing on the ethereal mackerel, one of my guests despairs that the fat in the more Western entrées makes them taste "dirty."

When I eat sushi, my idea of dessert is uni. (Although I must admit that after certain memorably esoteric sushi feasts, I've gone out for a pizza.) Is BondSt's chocolate fondue a better finale? I prefer the tangy sorbets piled on a leaf with two cookie spears or the chilled spring soup with Asian pears, raspberries, and a plop of crème fraîche in a stickiness of tapioca. And the butter cookies, chocolate-nut clusters, and petits fours on the "Sweet Nothings" plate are perfect with espresso, and a revelation with green tea.

BondSt, 6 Bond Street (777-2500). Dinner, Monday through Wednesday from 5:30 to 11 P.M., Thursday through Saturday till 11:30 P.M. A.E., M.C., V. ■

cue

A Weekly Guide to Entertainment and the Arts in New York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Side A

Label of Love

An all-star lineup celebrates a half-century of Folkways Records (page 170)

art 149 **bars** 172 **concerts** 173 **dance** 173 **kids** 177 **the mix** 174 **movies** 142 **nightlife** 169 **radio** 174 **restaurants** 159 **sports** 176 **television** 174 **theater** 154 **the written word** 174

movies

Stephen Fry...Gen Art Film Festival...*He Got Game*

New Films

★**The Apostle**—This is the best movie ever made about a man of God—which is to say, the most honest and morally the most ambiguous. Robert Duvall plays Sonny, a Texas Pentecostal preacher, and he's completely on top of what he's doing. One night Sonny has a vision: His wife (Farrah Fawcett, who is perfectly good) is sleeping with a handsome young minister. He returns home in a drunken rage, and, with half the town watching, takes a baseball bat to the minister's head. Sonny has to disappear fast, so he hits the road and emerges as a newborn itinerant man of God. He settles into a bedraggled but pleasant Louisiana town, where, identifying himself as "E.F., The Apostle," he joins forces with a retired black minister and builds a congregation from the ground up. *The Apostle* gets at something authentic and challenging—the insistent goodness of a man never free of dishonesty or sin. Sonny is too much a sinner simply to possess God. He remains an eternal suppliant, a candidate for blessedness, and therefore, despite everything, a hero. (Denby; 1/12/98) (About 1 hr. 50 mins.; NR) *The Screening Room; Worldwide Cinemas.*

★**As Good As It Gets**—In James L. Brooks's new picture, Helen Hunt plays Carol, a straight-talking single mother obsessed with the care of her severely asthmatic young son. Carol has neglected herself, and she falls into the one thing in the world that she needs least—a relationship with a matchlessly rude writer, Melvin (Jack Nicholson), who suffers from obsessive-compulsive disorder and torments his Manhattan neighbor—a gay artist (Greg Kinnear). But the movie, as we can tell early on, is a Scrooge story. The question is not when Melvin will melt but how. A superbly written and acted tearjerker. (Denby; 12/29/97) (2 hrs. 13 mins.; PG-13) *Embassy 2–3; Gemini.*

The Big Hit—Four hit men kidnap a Japanese heiress (played by China Chow) with mob connections. Starring Mark Wahlberg, Lou Diamond Phillips, Antonio Sabato Jr., Bokeem Woodbine, and Christina Applegate. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 19th Street East; 34th Street Showplace; Astor Plaza; Gemini; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; Metro Cinema; Centre Sunnyside; Movieworld.*

The Big Lebowski—Jeff Lebowski, known as the Dude (Jeff Bridges), shuffles through life in a pothead haze. He gets involved in a bizarre intrigue involving another man named Lebowski, a millionaire with a promiscuous young wife who may or may not have been kidnapped. Hired to deliver the ransom money, the Dude suffers a series of disasters, the result of his own ineptitude and the interventions of his bowling buddy Walter (John Goodman), a Jewish paranoid who misinterprets everything he sees. It's only amusing the first time the Dude gets lost in his own story—a story so incoherent that he can't explain it to anyone. (The funniest thing is a cameo appearance by John Turturro as a gay Latino bowler.) Jeff Bridges has so much dedication as an actor that he sacrifices himself to the Coen brothers' self-defeating conception. Even Bridges can't open up a character who remains unconscious. (Denby; 3/16/98) (1 hr. 57 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 62nd and Broadway.*

The Big One—Michael Moore takes a camera crew on his book tour and stops at various Fortune 500 companies to question their downsizing. (1 hr. 29 mins.; PG-13) *Village East; Sutton.*

★**The Butcher Boy**—Francie Brady (Eamonn Owens) grows up in a small Irish town with a drunkard and liar for a father and a beautiful madwoman for a mother. The boy receives no guidance at all—just the fervent guilty nonsense of his dad (Stephen Rea), a forlorn trumpet player who never finishes a tune. Francie and his friend Joe put together a mental life that is part fantasy, part role-playing, and Francie is an irrepressible entertainer. Jordan's direction is incisive and at times electrifying, with sudden outbreaks of violence that should warn us something bad is coming. Part of the ominousness is produced by sheer incomprehension. Much of the dialogue is delivered in the deep accents of County Monaghan, and I understood no more than half of what Eamonn Owens says. So I find myself in an embarrassing position: I think this is a great movie, but I'm not sure. (Denby; 4/13/98) (1 hr. 50 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Beekman; Lincoln Square.*

Character—A man's lifelong struggle with his overbearing father ends in a murder. Nominated for an Academy Award for best foreign film. (1 hr. 54 mins.; NR) *Regency.*

Chinese Box—A dying British journalist (Jeremy Irons) living in Hong Kong is in love with a former prostitute he can't have when he meets an equally engaging street hustler while videotaping the city for memory's sake. With Gong Li, Maggie Cheung, and Ruben Blades. Directed by Wayne Wang. (1 hr. 39 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Cinema I, II, Third Ave..*

City of Angels—The drearily inevitable has come true—an original and rather haunting poetic conception has been turned into a literal-minded love story. Wim Wenders's 1987 movie—on which this film is based—was set in Berlin when the Wall was still up and, for better or worse, the movie had a super-earthly delicacy. This movie is a love story right from the beginning. Nicolas Cage plays an angel named Seth who hangs around the operating rooms of an L.A. hospital, waiting to take away the patients who die. When a wired-up surgeon, Maggie Rice (Meg Ryan), loses a patient on the operating table, Seth falls in love with her, comforting her with an invisible hand as she weeps (it's a lovely moment, equal to anything in the original). But the movie quickly takes a tumble—it becomes an argument for life, for sensuous experience, for not living in the vacuum of immortality. But this is a movie set in Los Angeles, not in shattered, soulful, guilty Berlin. Could anyone possibly argue against pleasure in the sunlit paradise? The movie becomes a compellingly photographed advertisement for the good life, and nothing, in this setting, could be more redundant or banal. (Denby; 4/20/98) (2 hrs. 32 mins.; PG-13) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea; Murray Hill Cinemas; 72nd St. East; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; Kingsway; Pavilion Theatre; Main Street Cinemas; Movieworld.*

Déjà Vu—Victoria Foyt is an American woman who questions her love for her fiancé when she meets a man she feels she's known forever. With Stephen Dillane, Vanessa Redgrave, and Rachel Kempson. (1 hr. 56 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema; Eastside Playhouse.*

Didn't Do It for Love—A documentary of the life and times of dominatrix turned therapist Eva Norvind. Directed by Monika Treut. (1 hr. 22 mins.; NR) *Opens Friday at Cinema Village.*

Enter the Dragon—Bruce Lee is a martial artist hired by the CIA to bust an opium-dealing ring. Hollywood's first kung-fu film—released 25 years ago—made Bruce Lee an American star. Directed by Robert Clouse. (1 hr. 38 mins.; NR) *Cinema Village 12th St.*

Everest: The Movie—The first-ever IMAX footage from Everest documents the 1996 summit climb of an international expedition. Directed by David Breashears and Ed Viesturs. (45 mins.; NR) *Lincoln Square.*

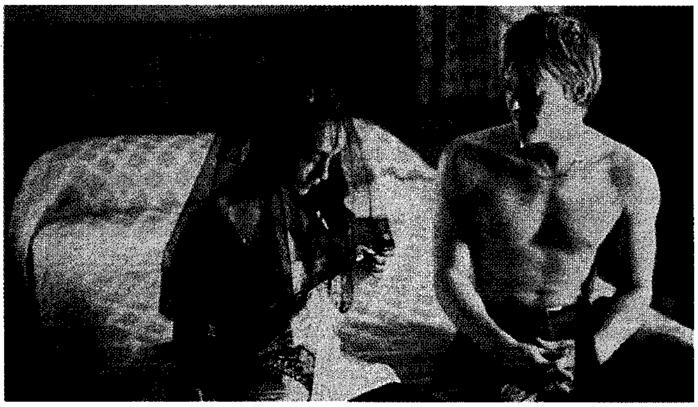
Fireworks (Hana-Bi)—Ultra-talented Takeshi Kitano is a good cop trying to right the injustices around

Ground Rules:

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by David Denby...A ★ denotes a current release that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element...Reviews are followed by the Manhattan theaters where the film is playing.

Festival
The Indie Hop

Testing the attention span and party-going endurance of ciné-hipsters city-wide, the Gen Art Film Festival returns for a third year of raking through Americana, indie-style. Top choices include the gangland story *Six Ways to Sunday* (below, starring Elina Lowensohn, Adrien Brody, and Debbie Harry as an overbearing mom) and *Scrapple,* a visit to hippie-dippy Ajax, Colorado, during the shaggy seventies. All films have an after-party, held at clubs like Life, Lot 61, and the temporary hot spot Kit Kat Klub. See "Museums, Societies, Etc." for more info.



Photograph courtesy of the Gen Art Film Festival.

him with a heavy, violent hand. Written and directed by Kitano. (1 hr. 43 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

A Friend of the Deceased—A black comedy set in a new Ukraine ruled by entrepreneurs, mobsters, and the black market. Starring Alexandre Lazarev and Tatiana Krivitska. Directed by Vyacheslav Krishtofovich. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) *Opens Friday at Lincoln Plaza and Quad Cinemas.*

Go Now—Robert Carlyle is a day laborer whose life turns upside down when he discovers he has multiple sclerosis. Also starring Juliet Aubrey. Directed by Michael Winterbottom. (1 hr. 28 mins.; NR) *Opens Friday.*

★**Good Will Hunting**—Mopping up at M.I.T., Will Hunting (Matt Damon) casually solves problems left on the blackboards, problems intended to stump the best mathematical minds in America. The formidable Professor Lambeau (Stellan Skarsgård), recognizing Will's uncanny talent, takes the boy under his wing, keeping him out of jail by agreeing to get him into therapy. Will lands in the office of Lambeau's old friend and rival Sean McGuire (Robin Williams), a bit of a screw-up himself but perhaps the one shrink in Boston who can understand Will. This movie has wit and temperament to burn—there isn't a dead scene in it. In the end, however, the script takes a disastrous turn toward conventionality. What I will always remember is an edge of temper. The film persuades us that genius is of incalculable worth but utter hell to live with. (Denby; 12/8/97) (2 hrs. 5 mins.; R) *Village East; New York Twin; Lincoln Square.*

Grey Gardens—The 1976 Maysles documentary of a branch of the Bouvier family (specifically, Jackie O's aunt "Big Edith" and cousin "Little Edie") that lived in squalor in East Hampton. (1 hr. 34 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

He Got Game—Denzel Washington is the father of the top high-school hoops star in the nation, a teenager who has to decide whether to go to college or join the NBA. Directed by Spike Lee. (2 hrs. 11 mins.; R) *Opens Friday.*

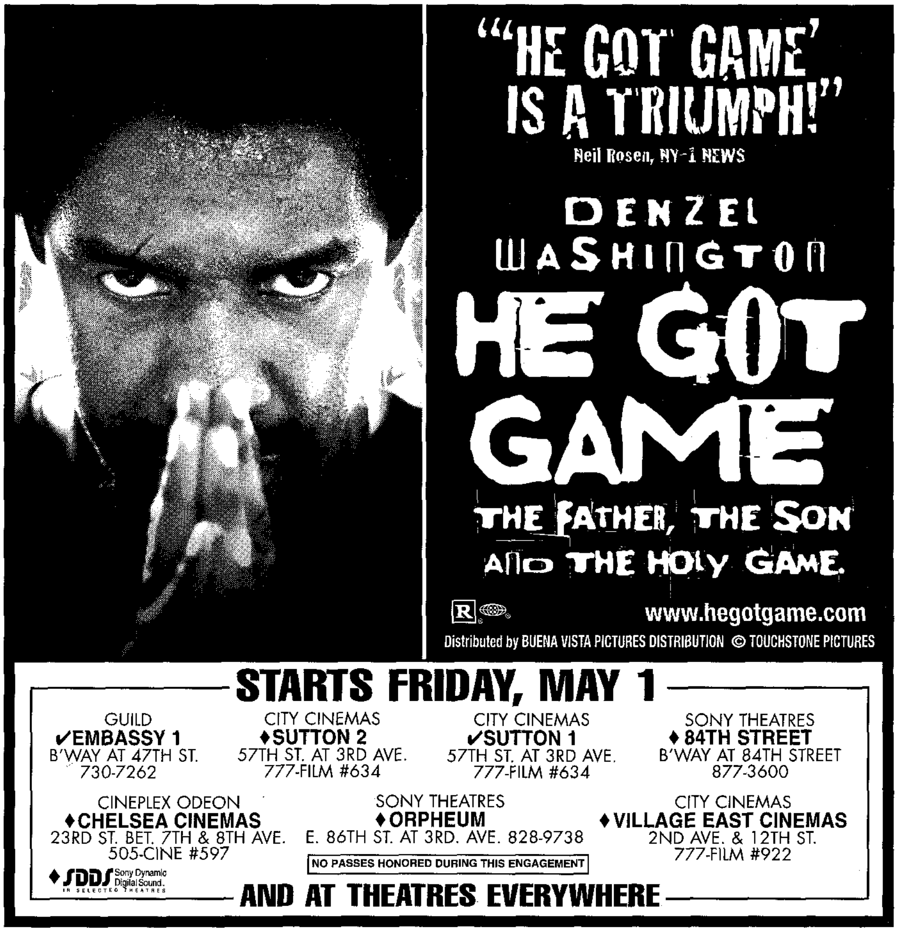
Healing by Killing—Inspired by the book *Nazi Doctors,* Israeli filmmaker Nitzan Aviram analyzes the role of doctors and psychiatrists in early Nazi experiments and the role this history plays on today's medical ethics. (1 hr. 30 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

I Think I Do—Five years after graduation, six college friends reunite to attend a classmate's wedding. With Alexis Arquette, Maddie Corman, and Guillermo Diaz. Directed by Brian Sloan. (1 hr. 31 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

★**L.A. Confidential**—The best American movie of 1997. Based on James Ellroy's 1990 novel about corruption and honor in the L.A.P.D., it's set in 1953 after the local Mafia boss has gone to prison. A crumb-bum named Sid Hudgens (Danny DeVito) is the publisher of a tabloid scandal sheet; he alerts the police to trivial forms of vice and then photographs for his magazine a celebrity cop, Jack Vincennes (Kevin Spacey), making the bust. A bullheaded cop, Bud White (Russell Crowe), is a tool of the seemingly benevolent but actually vicious chief of detectives, Dudley Smith (James Cromwell). Ed Exley, played by Guy Pearce, is a straight-arrow cop, all ambition and calculation. Kim Basinger, soft and saddened, is very touching as a guilty hooker, a good-bad girl worthy of the high forties. The movie is filled with wonderful actors—David Strathairn, in a pencil-line mustache; Simon Baker Denny as an eager-to-please young actor-stud. This violent story truly earns its quiet, ambiguous final note of exhausted calm. (Denby; 9/29/97) (2 hrs. 17 mins.; R) *New York Twin.*

Lost in Space—The sixties television show comes to the screen with William Hurt, Matt LeBlanc, Gary Oldman, Heather Graham, and Mimi Rogers. (1 hr. 30 mins.; PG-13) *Village Theatre VII; 19th Street East; Murray Hill Cinemas; Sutton; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; Olympia Theatre; Pavilion Theatre; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas; Movieworld.*

Major League: Back to the Minors—A burned-out minor-league pitcher takes over as coach of a triple-A team and makes it a winner. Starring Corbin Bernsen and Scott Bakula. (1 hr. 30 mins.; PG-13) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea; Criterion Center; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; New Coliseum; Pavilion Theatre; Centre Sunnyside.*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Marius and Jeannette—A working-class love story between a cement-factory guard and a vivacious supermarket cashier. Starring Ariane Ascaride (winner of the 1998 César for best actress) and Gérard Meylan. Opens Friday at Lincoln Plaza and Quad Cinemas. (1 hr. 42 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Mercury Rising—When an autistic child accidentally breaks the national-security code in a puzzle-book contest, Bruce Willis is the FBI agent who protects him. (2 hrs. 10 mins.; R) *Criterion Center; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Square; Movieworld.*

Midaq Alley—The award-winning story of various characters living in the same poor Mexico City neighborhood, as told in four *Short Cuts*–like episodes. Starring Salma Hayek, Ernesto Gómez Cruz, and María Rojo. Directed by Jorge Fons. Based on the novel by Egyptian Nobel Prize winner Naguib Mahfouz. (2 hrs. 20 mins.; NR) *Cinema Village.*

★**Mrs. Dalloway**—In this accomplished but slightly tedious adaptation of Virginia Woolf's great novel, Vanessa Redgrave is Clarissa Dalloway, a prosperous woman—married to a member of Parliament—who is preparing for her annual party. In the hours before the party, Mrs. Dalloway reviews her life, casting back 30 years to easy summer days at her family's country estate, where, as a young woman, she rejected a demanding, puppyish suitor, Peter Walsh, in favor of the more stable and successful Richard Dalloway. Did she marry the right man? *Mrs. Dalloway* is at its most inventive, and most Woolfian, when Redgrave is front and center, behaving with elaborate social grace and thinking very different things to herself. Just hearing Redgrave pronounce the word "dis-ahs-ter" (her appraisal of her own party) is reason enough to see the movie. In any case, I can't imagine any other actress large enough (in every sense) to hold together this plotless story. Redgrave makes the heroine all of a piece—timid, conventional, but alive to every breeze of consciousness. (Denby; 2/23/98) (1 hr. 37 mins.; PG-13) *Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Documentary Career Girl

World-class dominatrix Eva Norvind shares her checkered past in *Didn't Do It for Love*, a one-of-a-kind documentary of the Norwegian bombshell's days as a Mexican film star (in the sixties), as a New York S&M star (in the eighties), and, most recently, as a therapist to sex offenders and a graduate student in forensic psychology. Opens Friday, May 1, at Cinema Village.

Nightwatch—Ewan MacGregor is a law student working part-time as a night watchman in a morgue, while a serial killer roams the city. With Nick Nolte and Patricia Arquette. (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *Village East; Cinema I, II, Third Ave..*

The Odd Couple II—Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau are Felix and Oscar again in Neil Simon's new chapter on the cranky couple. (1 hr. 39 mins.; PG-13) *Art Greenwich Twin; 59th Street East; Kingsway; Pavilion Theatre; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas; The Movies at Bayside.*

Parallel Sons—An small-town guy connects with and falls for a city boy who has escaped from the local prison. Starring Gabriel Mann and Laurence Mason. Directed by John G. Young. (1 hr. 33 mins.; NR) *Opens Friday at the Screening Room.*

Paulie—When a talking parrot talks too much to his little-girl owner, he gets thrown out of the house and has to make his way cross-country to find her again. With Gena Rowlands, Tony Shalhoub, Cheech Marin, and Buddy Hackett. (1 hr. 45 mins.; PG) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea; Guild 50th Street; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Square; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas; Movieworld; The Movies at Bayside.*

The Players Club—A young mother putting herself through college by stripping finds it's not so easy to separate herself from the sleaze. Starring Bernie Mac and Monica Calhoun. Written and directed by Ice Cube. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) *Village East; 19th Street East; Criterion Center; 86th Street; 84th Street; New Coliseum; Nova.*

A Price Above Rubies—Renee Zellweger is an Orthodox woman who gets a job in the jewelry business and begins to question the religious community she's living in. Also starring Julianna Margulies and Christopher Eccleston. Directed by Boaz Yakin. (1 hr. 56 mins.; R) *Paris Theatre.*

★**Primary Colors**—This entertaining but rather peculiar movie (adapted from Joe Klein's novel by Mike Nichols and his longtime collaborator, Elaine May) asks extraordinary questions, and I wish it were better equipped to give the answers. The narrator is a rather bland African-American political operative—Henry Burton, the grandson of a civil-rights leader. Burton, played by Adrian Lester, is forever worrying about the governor's honor. The president-to-be and his circle are portrayed as foul-mouthed and sexually active. The candidate and his wife, Susan (Emma Thompson), are not exactly cooing lovebirds—their relationship is scandalously funny, at times pathetic, at times noble. Physically, Thompson is hard and linear, while Travolta is all rolling ease, his body swiveling, rocking—he seems to carry ball bearings in every joint. Billy Bob Thornton is entertaining as Richard Jemmons, the James Carville stand-in; Kathy Bates, as the Betsey Wright figure Libby Holden, is like a pile driver with superb timing—she's mesmerizing. It's Libby's job to cover the governor's tracks (one gets the impression she's kicked a ton of dirt). But is the portrait accurate? Though I enjoyed all the smart talk and profane irreverence, I didn't take the picture all that seriously. That is, I took it not as reality but as an entertaining convention, a movieish fantasy of what political life is like—quarrelsome, colorful as hell, unburdened by drudgery and nagging detail. (Denby; 3/23/98) (2 hrs. 23 mins.; R) *Waverly; Chelsea; Coronet; Ziegfeld; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; Metro Cinema.*

Shooting Fish—Two con men meet a pretty medical student who helps them into—and out of—trouble. Starring Dan Futterman, Kate Beckinsale, and Stuart Townsend. Directed by Stefan Schwartz. (1 hr. 33 mins. PG) *Opens Friday.*

Sliding Doors—Gwyneth Paltrow is a London girl who gets to answer the eternal question (What if?) when her life heads down two different paths at the same time. (1 hr. 45 mins.; PG-13) *Village East; Chelsea; Crown Gotham; Lincoln Square.*

Sour Grapes—Two cousins' lives are ruined when one wins the slots after borrowing quarters from the other. Written by Larry David, co-creator of *Seinfeld*. (1 hr. 37 mins.; R) *Village East; 19th Street East; Gemini; Lincoln Square.*

★**The Spanish Prisoner**—Campbell Scott, of the serious brow and the serious cleft, plays a young inventor, Joe Ross, a self-made man uneasy among the rich and powerful, yet secretly eager to join their ranks. What it is that Joe Ross has invented we never find out—"the process," it is called, some sort of technological masterpiece that will earn untold millions for Joe's company. A shadowy international businessman (Steve Martin) shows up and flatters Joe and the trap has been set. Mamet has made Rebecca Pidgeon (his wife) quite extraordinarily dislikable as a secretary who claims to be Joe's ally. As Joe gets more and more isolated, Mamet takes us deeper into fear than he ever has in the past, and that's an achievement. Hitchcock is the model here, but to become Hitchcock's equivalent, Mamet has to learn to trust the camera more than he does; he has to stop trying to control everything with language; he has to just give in to the fluency, the ease, the free-flowing pleasure of making a movie. (Denby; 4/13/98) (1 hr. 52 mins.; PG) *Angelika Film Center; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Species II—An American spaceship returns from Mars carrying an alien species intent on taking over the earth. Starring Natasha Henstridge. Directed by Peter Medac. (1 hr. 35 mins.; R) *Waverly; 19th Street East; 34th Street Showplace; Criterion Center; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; Pavilion Theatre; Movieworld.*

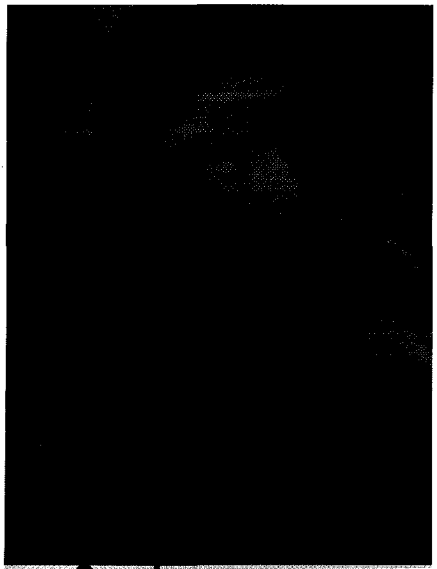
Suicide Kings—A group of prep-school boys kidnap a Mafia kingpin and hold him for ransom. Starring Christopher Walken, Denis Leary, Jay Mohr, Johnny Galecki, Henry Thomas, Sean Patrick Flanery, and Jeremy Sisto. (1 hr. 47 mins.; R) *Art Greenwich Twin; Chelsea; Coronet; 84th Street.*

Tarzan and the Lost City—Casper Van Diem is Tarzan and Jane March is Jane, in the continuing story of the man raised by apes. (1 hr. 15 mins.; PG) *Village East; 19th Street East; Criterion Center; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; New Coliseum; Nova; Kingsway; Pavilion Theatre; Centre Sunnyside; Plaza.*

The Object of My Affection—Stephen McCauley's novel has been adapted for the movies with disastrous panache by playwright Wendy Wasserstein and director Nicholas Hytner. Jennifer Aniston plays Nina, a snippy-snappy young social worker in Brooklyn who takes as a roommate a lovable gay teacher, George (Paul Rudd). When Nina is made pregnant by her overbearing and unsuitable boyfriend (John Pankow), she asks George to raise the child with her. But Nina wants George's sexual love as well, and although George is willing to be daddy, he cannot be lover. Poor Nina is left with nothing to do but throw fits and turn her back in sorrow and furiously wash the dishes. This film is one of those cases, I think, in which the audience is so frustrated by an untenable situation onscreen that it shuts down on the movie: Paul Rudd is charming, and some of the scenes are intelligently written and played, but dramatically, the film has nowhere to go. (Denby; 4/27/98) (1 hr. 51 mins.; R) *Village East; Chelsea West; Murray Hill Cinemas; Criterion Center; 86th Street; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Square; Olympia Theatre; Kingsway; Pavilion Theatre; Main Street Cinemas; Movieworld; The Movies at Bayside.*

★**Titanic**—Writer-director James Cameron has pulled it off. This fabulously expensive watery epic is actually a very good movie. *Titanic* begins with a treasure hunter, Brock Lovett (Bill Paxton), who is obsessed with the sunken hulk. Lovett's submersible robot enters one of the deluxe staterooms to retrieve not the famous diamond he was looking for but only a drawing of a naked young woman wearing the stone. It turns out that the woman, Rose, is

Photographs courtesy of First Run Features.



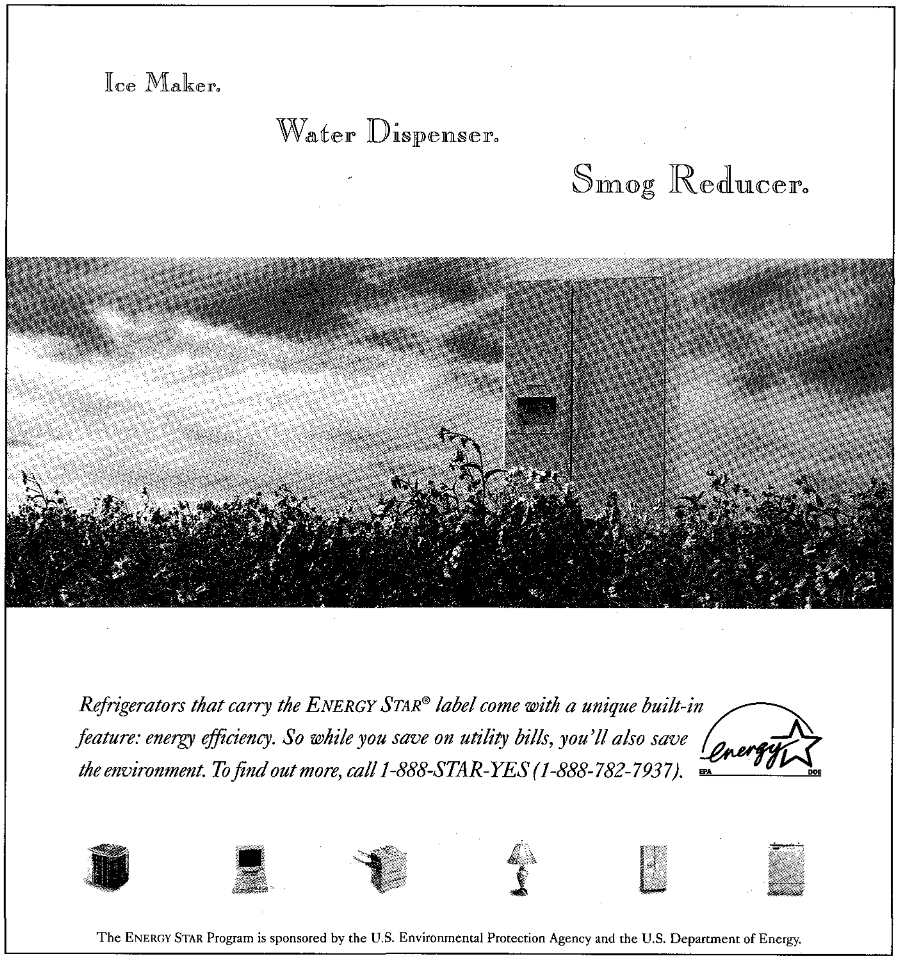
Opening
Hard-Times Hero

Take the frustrated-working-man character, add a little charm and good looks, and you get . . . Robert Carlyle! In 'Go Now,' the 'Full Monty' star plays a plucky British laborer who's never been happier—great girlfriend, great mates, great weekends spent playing soccer—until he discovers he's battling a crippling illness. The latest from director Michael Winterbottom ('Welcome to Sarajevo') opens Friday, May 1.

still alive; she's an articulate 100-year-old beauty (Gloria Stuart) who joins Lovett at his ship and then holds him and his crew of techno-ruffians in thrall with her story of what happened. Back in 1912, the 17-year-old Rose DeWitt Bukater (Kate Winslet) boards the ship in utter misery. Rose is accompanied by her awful fiancé, Cal Hockley (Billy Zane), a domineering steel-baron heir from Pittsburgh, and her snobbish mother (Frances Fisher). Onboard, Rose meets her soul mate, Jack Dawson (Leonardo DiCaprio). A gambler, Jack has the wit to see that Rose's unhappiness hides a bold, deeply romantic and sexual nature. Except for the crude, good-hearted Denver millionairess Molly Brown (Kathy Bates), the wealthy are unspeakably rude or just frightened and starchy. Jack, the interloper, takes Rose down to steerage, where the real people are having themselves a fine time drinking and dancing up a storm. This sort of cheesy stuff is redeemed only by the romantic charge between Winslet and DiCaprio. The sinking is lovely—detailed, agonizingly slow at first and then rushed and panicky and grandly gruesome at the end. As Jack and Rose hang at the railing, people lose their grip and go crashing down the deck or fall from the heights into the water. After the ship goes under, Cameron has his finest, cruelest moment—the survivors left in the vast expanse of freezing water wailing in confusion. As for Rose, she is delivered into an active and brilliant life. The ship may be ponderous, but Cameron's conception stays light in the water. (Denby; 12/29/97) (3 hrs. 17 mins.; PG-13) *Village Theatre VII; 34th Street Showplace; Chelsea; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; New Coliseum; Nova; Kingsway; Pavilion Theatre; Movieworld; Plaza; The Movies at Bayside.*

The Truce—See Denby, page 125. (1 hr. 56 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Cinema I, II, Third Ave..*

Photograph courtesy of Gramercy Pictures.



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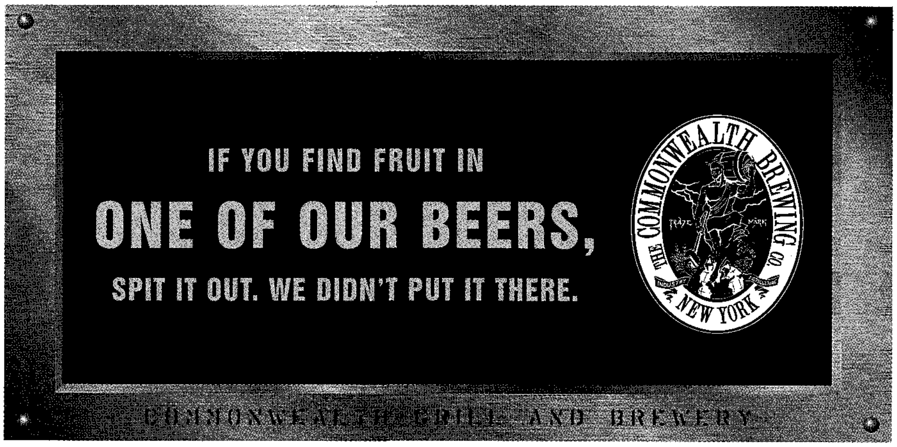

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TwentyFourSeven—Bob Hoskins sets up a boxing club in an attempt to restore dignity to the youth of his dying English town. Directed by newcomer Shane Meadows. Starts Wednesday at Lincoln Plaza. (1 hr. 33 mins.; R) *Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Two Girls and a Guy—See Denby, page 127. (1 hr. 28 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Chelsea; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Lincoln Square; Pavilion Theatre.*

The Ugly—A pretty New Zealand psychiatrist gets drawn in by a serial killer as she determines whether he's fit to stand trial. Directed by Scott Reynolds. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Opens Friday.*

Who the Hell Is Juliette?—Filmmaker Carlos Marcovich studies two girls—one a Cuban teenager and the other a Mexican model—over the course of three years. (1 hr. 31 mins.; NR) *Cinema Village 12th St.*

★**Wild Man Blues**—Woody Allen travels from around Europe, playing concerts at night while residing with Soon-Yi Previn in hotels filed with marble and burnished wood, and everything has to be just so. In each hotel, the couple takes a suite so Woody has at his disposal a separate bathroom in which to perform unknown rituals and ablutions. Crowds wait outside his window, as if he were a royal personage. It's the hard easy life. *Wild Man Blues,* directed by Barbara Kopple, is a portrait of a man caught out of his milieu—out of New York, where Woody can work and rest exactly the same way every day. He has plenty of helpers—his sister is along for the ride, and Jean Doumanian, his producer, shows up now and then. Of those present, Soon-Yi Previn is actually the toughest on him. She's a strong-willed young woman, but she doesn't have a lot to say—as far as we can see, conversation between Woody and Soon-Yi centers on his moods, his reputation, his comforts. He plays the neurotic to entertain us, but he's also genuinely cut off and self-protecting, and there isn't much sign here that he sees anything the slightest bit wrong with his situation. (Denby; 4/27/98) (1 hr. 44 mins.; PG) *Angelika Film Center; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Wild Things—It is my dreary duty to report that this film lacks fantasy and flamboyance, that it lacks, precisely, wild things, and that most of it is just flat. Matt Dillon plays a guidance counselor at what appears to be a very backward high school at the edge of the swamp. The boys are louts, and literally every girl in the school makes eyes at Mr. Dillon. One of them (Den Richards, of the big pouty lips) accuses him of ra . Is he a louse who sleeps with students? An honorable guy framed by an imaginative teen? Or is there some larger game at stake? And the druggy girl with short dark hair (Neve Campbell), a dropout who sits in a bungalow reading Céline—obviously she's up to no good. The movie's most prominent feature is a series of sudden plot twists. The press has been sternly advised not to give any of these developments away, and I shall obey, though I can't help pointing out that the twists are so abrupt and mechanical, and so little related to character, that they may very well have been devised by a dirty-minded 10-year-old diddling an interactive video game before nodding off to sleep. (Denby; 4/6/98) (1 hr. 53 mins.; R) *Criterion Center; Main Street Cinemas.*

Wilde—Stephen Fry is the Irish playwright in th exploration of his life and his passionate affair with the young, handsome Lord Alfred Douglas (Jude Law). Also starring Jennifer Ehle, Vanessa Redgrave, and Tom Wilkinson. Directed by Brian Gilbert. (1 hr. 56 mins.; R) *Opens Friday.*

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

Angelika Film Center—18 W. Houston St. (995-2000) *The Butcher Boy; Chinese Box; Gummo; The Spanish Prisoner; The Truce; Two Girls and a Guy; Wild Man Blues.*

Art Greenwich Twin—Greenwich Ave. at 12th St. (505-CINE#616) *The Odd Couple II; Suicide Kings.*

Cinema Village 12th St.—22 E. 12th St. (924-3363) *Enter the Dragon; Who the Hell Is Juliette?*

Film Forum—209 W. Houston St. (727-8110) *Fireworks (Hana-Bi); Grey Gardens; Healing By Killing.*

Quad Cinema—34 W. 13th St. (255-8800) *Déjà Vu; I Think I Do; Marius and Jeannette.*

The Screening Room—54 Varick St. (below Canal) (334-2100) *The Apostle; Parallel Sons.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Village East—189 Second Ave., at 12th St. (529-6799) *The Big One; Good Will Hunting; Nightwatch; The Players Club; Sliding Doors; Sour Grapes; Tarzan and the Lost City; The Object of My Affection.*

Village Theatre VII—66 Third Ave., at 11th St. (982-0400) *The Big Hit; The Big Lebowski; City of Angels; Lost in Space; Major League: Back to the Minors; Paulie; Titanic.*

Waverly—323 Sixth Ave., at W. 3rd St. (505-CINE#603) *Primary Colors; Scream 2; Species II.*

14th–41st Streets

19th Street East—890 Broadway, at 19th St. (260-8000) *The Big Hit; Lost in Space; The Players Club; Sour Grapes; Species II; Tarzan and the Lost City.*

34th Street Showplace—238 E. 34th St. (532-5544) *The Big Hit; Species II; Titanic.*

Chelsea—260 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#597) *City of Angels; Major League: Back to the Minors; Paulie; Primary Colors; Sliding Doors; Suicide Kings; Titanic; Two Girls and a Guy.*

Chelsea West—333 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#614) *Scream 2; The Object of My Affection.*

Murray Hill Cinemas—160 E. 34th St. (689-6548) *City of Angels; Lost in Space; Scream 2; The Object of My Affection.*

42nd–60th Streets

59th Street East—239 E. 59th St. (505-CINE#615) *The Odd Couple II.*

Astor Plaza—44th St. bet. Broadway and Eighth Ave. (869-8340) *The Big Hit.*

Cinema I, II, Third Ave.—1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (753-6022) *Nightwatch; The Truce; Two Girls and a Guy.* Opening 4/29: *Chinese Box.*

Coronet—993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (505-CINE#608) *Primary Colors; Suicide Kings.*

Criterion Center—1514 Broadway, bet. 44th and 45th Sts. (354-0900) *Major League: Back to the Minors; Mercury Rising; The Players Club; Species II; Tarzan and the Lost City; The Object of My Affection; Wild Things.*

Crown Gotham—969 Third Ave., bet. 57th and 58th Sts. (759-2262) *Sliding Doors.*

Eastside Playhouse—919 Third Ave., bet. 55th and 56th Sts. (755-3020) *Déjà Vu.*

Embassy 1—1560 Broadway, bet. 46th and 47th Sts. (302-0494) *Good Will Hunting; Nightwatch.* Opening 5/1: *He Got Game.*

Embassy 2-3—701 Seventh Ave., bet. 47th and 48th Sts. (730-7262) *As Good As It Gets; Scream 2.*

Guild 50th Street—33 W. 50th St. (757-2406) *Paulie.*

Paris Theatre—4 W. 58th St. (688-3800) *A Price Above Rubies.*

State—1540 Broadway (391-2900) *City of Angels; Lost in Space; The Odd Couple II; Titanic.*

Sutton—205 E. 57th St. (759-1411) *The Big One; Lost in Space.*

Worldwide Cinemas—340 W. 50th St. (505-CINE#610) *The Apostle; Dark City; The Full Monty; The Gingerbread Man; Great Expectations; Wag the Dog.*

Ziegfeld—141 W. 54th St. (505-CINE#602) *Primary Colors.*

61st Street and Above, East Side

72nd St. East—1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (879-1313) *City of Angels.*

86th Street—125 E. 86th St. (505-CINE#604) *The Players Club; The Object of My Affection.*

86th Street East—210 E. 86th St. (249-1144) *Closed for renovations.*

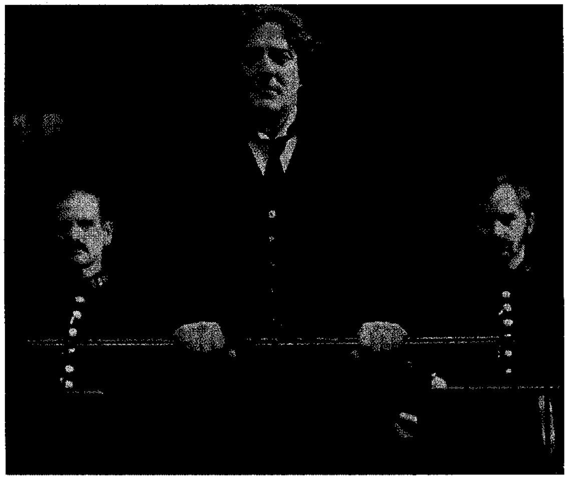
Beekman—1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (505-CINE#606) *The Butcher Boy.*

Talent

Born to Be Wilde

British actor and writer Stephen Fry is a big man with intellectual and physical energy to spare. Sitting next to him at lunch, you sometimes feel the need to duck away from his gesticulating arms—and long sentences. Fry, best known as the unflappable butler on the television series *Jeeves and Wooster,* is currently starring as the troubled Irish playwright Oscar Wilde in *Wilde* (opening Friday). Fry is passionate about setting Wilde's record straight. "People have this view of Oscar as an immensely arch, brittle, camp figure who said clever things—probably at the expense of others," he explains. "But there's a gravity and a decency and a kindness about him that people need to see." As a kid, Fry found a hero in Wilde ("When you're growing up as a gay young thing, you need an endorsement," he says); today he bears an uncanny resemblance to him ("That happened once I started to develop new and interesting chins"). When pressed, the gracious Fry will admit that the similarities aren't just physical: The two share "a supreme—or terrible—self-consciousness," he says. "Oscar was deeply aware of who he was and the impression he made on others. Instead of making people feel stupid, he made them feel ten feet tall. He was brilliant and wittier than they were, but he didn't throw it at them." The film follows Wilde through a well-intentioned marriage and an ill-fated affair with the petulant Lord Alfred Douglas (known as "Bosie"), a handsome young poet who persuaded Wilde to enter into an unwinnable lawsuit. The result was two years in prison and, ultimately, a lonely death. "Can one love too much?" asks Fry, waving a postprandial cigarette. "That's the beauty of it! People can tear each other apart. The best tragedies are like that, you know. Love just loves where it loves . . . and Bosie was good company." So, for the record, is Fry.

PATRICIA FALVO



Photograph by Liam Daniel/Sony Pictures Classics.

First & 62nd St. Cinema—400 E. 62nd St. (505-CINE#957) *Mercury Rising; Paulie; Scream 2; The Spanish Prisoner; Species II; Tarzan and the Lost City; The Object of My Affection; Titanic.*

Gemini—1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (832-1670) *As Good As It Gets; The Big Hit; Sour Grapes.*

New York Twin—1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (744-7339) *Good Will Hunting; L.A. Confidential.*

Orpheum 7—1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (828-9738) *The Big Hit; City of Angels; Lost in Space; Major League: Back to the Minors; Primary Colors; Species II; Tarzan and the Lost City; Titanic.*

UA East—1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (249-5100) *Scream 2.*

61st Street and Above, West Side

62nd and Broadway—1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (505-CINE#864) *The Big Lebowski.*

84th Street—2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (877-3600) *The Big Hit; Lost in Space; The Players Club; Primary Colors; Species II; Suicide Kings.*

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas—30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (757-2280) *Marius and Jeannette; Mrs. Dalloway; The Spanish Prisoner; TwentyFourSeven; Wild Man Blues.*

Lincoln Square—1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (336-5000) *The Butcher Boy; City of Angels; Good Will Hunting; Major League: Back to the Minors; Mercury Rising; Paulie; Scream 2; Sliding Doors; Sour Grapes; Tarzan and the Lost City; The Object of My Affection; Titanic; Two Girls and a Guy.* IMAX: *Everest; Across the Sea of Time; L5–First City in Space; Into the Deep.*

Metro Cinema—2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (505-CINE#609) *The Big Hit; Primary Colors.*

New Coliseum—701 W. 181st St. (740-1545) *Major League: Back to the Minors; The Players Club; Tarzan and the Lost City; Titanic.*

Nova—3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (862-5728) *The Players Club; Tarzan and the Lost City; Titanic.*

Olympia Theatre—2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (505-CINE#613) *Lost in Space; The Object of My Affection.*

Regency—1987 Broadway, bet. 67th and 68th Sts. (505-CINE#585) *Character.*

Bronx

Area Code 718

Bay Plaza—2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (320-3020) *Barney's Great Adventure; The Big Hit; City of Angels; Lost in Space; Major League: Back to the Minors; Mercury Rising; My Giant; The Players Club; Ride; Scream 2; Species II; Tarzan and the Lost City; Titanic.*

Concourse Plaza—214 E. 161th St. (588-8800) *Barney's Great Adventure; Lost in Space; Mercury Rising; Mr. Nice Guy; The Players Club; Ride; Species II; Titanic; U.S. Marshals; Wild Things.*

Whitestone—2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (409-9037) *Barney's Great Adventure; City of Angels; Lost in Space; The Man in the Iron Mask; Mercury Rising; Mr. Nice Guy; My Giant; The Players Club; Ride; Species II; Titanic; U.S. Marshals; Wild Things.*

Brooklyn

Area Code 718

Alpine—6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (777-FILM#580) *The Odd Couple II; Paulie; Scream 2; Tarzan and the Lost City; The Object of My Affection; Titanic; Two Girls and a Guy.*

Canarsie—9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (251-0700) *The Players Club; Scream 2; Tarzan and the Lost City.*

Fortway—6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (777-FILM#578) *The Big Hit; City of Angels; Lost in Space; Major League: Back to the Minors; The Players Club; Species II.*

Kenmore—Church Ave. nr. Flatbush Ave. (777-FILM#576) *The Big Hit; Major League: Back to the Minors; The Players Club; Species II; Tarzan and the Lost City.*

Kent Triplex—Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (338-3371) *City of Angels; Scream 2; Tarzan and the Lost City.*

Kids *continued from page 81*

RESTAURANT

THE HOG PIT 22 NINTH AVENUE, AT 13TH STREET; 604-0092

A raucous bar and restaurant located in the heart of the meatpacking district—and once a sibling of the infamous, brastrewn Hogs 'n' Heifers—wouldn't seem like the appropriate spot for kids. But the Hog Pit's down-home-style fried chicken, mashed potatoes, and macaroni-and-cheese dinners are time-honored crowd-pleasers. Grown-ups appreciate the fact that they can actually drink and eat in peace while the kids play at the backroom foosball and pool tables; the wait staff doesn't seem to worry about their running underfoot. Chef Terrie Mangrum suggests, though, that you "bring the kids before nine, because after that it can get pretty rowdy."

CAREER FANTASY

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In the few remaining moments before "Website designer" overtakes "fireman" as the preadolescent's professional aspiration of choice, take your tyke to Randalls Island to watch New York's bravest tackle artificial burning buildings, rappel out of windows, and learn to handle the big hose. With a big back lot full of buildings that have been piped full of gas and are rigged to flame on command, the training center is like a real-life Schwarzenegger movie—and it's free. (Monday through Friday; by appointment only; contact Captain Thomas Tropea.)

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CLOTHING STORE

MARSHA D.D. 1324 LEXINGTON AVENUE, AT 88TH STREET; 534-8700

Last month, Marsha Drogin Dayan split her hip children's clothes mini-empire by opening a new boys' shop next to her nearly two-year-old shop that now is only for the girls. "The boys really know their labels," she says, "and they're very loyal to what they like." Some specialty shops may have bigger selections; Marsha D.D. carries what kids really want. Boys run for JNCO wide-leg jeans and Quiksilver surf shorts, while girls like the dragon-print tank tops and khaki bell-bottoms. "I can't keep these girls' pajamas on the rack," Dayan whispers. "Everyone wants to be cool for camp."

TOY STORE

THE THIRTEEN/WNET STORE OF KNOWLEDGE 1091 THIRD AVENUE, AT 64TH STREET; 223-0018

Don't be put off by its somewhat smug name—the Store of Knowledge is a place where you'll find a toy for every man, woman, and child. Lined with puzzles, games, stuffed animals, videos, books, and craft and science kits, the store also showcases a video library of popular British sitcoms. It's not too highbrow to offer yo-yos, Aliens 'N Goo glow-in-the-dark slime, and, next month, Teletubbies, though it might prefer that you fortify your shopping cart with Stephen Hawking's *Universe* video series. And since a percentage of your purchase goes to Channel 13, shopping there will even alleviate some of that pledge-week guilt.

CHILDREN'S THEATER

TADA! 120 WEST 28TH STREET; 627-1732

A fourteen-year-old, 40-kid repertory theater troupe, TADA! prides itself on original, topical, and exuberant shows. Founder and artistic director Janine Nina Trevens started TADA! "to give kids a safe place to be to really learn about musical theater and themselves. It's my idea of what the world could be." The themes of TADA!'s shows tend to be torn right from the headlines—of the school paper. The group is currently working on a musical called *Fashion Statement,* which speaks to the recent controversy about school uniforms and clothes-related violence. The summer show, *Getting Out of School,* will connect with children of all ages, covering anxiety about the SATs and sitting still. For teenagers, the theater produces dramas about heavier subjects: A father-daughter crisis and suicide were the topics of a staged reading in April. And, says, Trevens, "a very popular musical was about kids who get lost underneath the subway and meet rats who paint and dancing mummies from the Metropolitan Museum—the things that make New York seem like New York." ▬

Kings Plaza—5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (777-FILM#579) *Barney's Great Adventure; The Big Hit; Lost in Space; Major League: Back to the Minors; Paulie; The Players Club; Species II.*

Kingsway—946 Kings Hwy. at Coney Island Ave. (777-FILM#577) *City of Angels; The Odd Couple II; Tarzan and the Lost City; The Object of My Affection; Titanic.*

Marboro—6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (232-4000) *City of Angels; Major League: Back to the Minors; Tarzan and the Lost City; The Object of My Affection; Wild Things.*

Pavilion Theatre—188 Prospect Park West, Brooklyn (369-0838) *Barney's Great Adventure; City of Angels; Lost in Space; Major League: Back to the Minors; The Odd Couple II; Species II; Tarzan and the Lost City; The Object of My Affection; Titanic; Two Girls and a Guy.*

Ridgewood—55-27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (821-5993) *The Big Hit; Lost in Space; Tarzan and the Lost City; Titanic.*

The Movies at Sheepshead Bay—3907 Shore Pkwy, off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (615-1700) *Barney's Great Adventure; The Big Hit; City of Angels; Lost in Space; My Giant; Paulie; Sliding Doors; Species II; Suicide Kings; The Object of My Affection; Titanic.*

Queens

Area Code 718

Astoria—28-60 Steinway St. (726-1279) *The Big Hit; Major League: Back to the Minors; Mercury Rising; The Players Club; Species II; The Object of My Affection; Titanic.*

Bay Terrace—211-01 26th Ave. and Bell Blvd., Bayside (428-4040) *Barney's Great Adventure; The Big Hit; City of Angels; Good Will Hunting; Lost in Space; Major League: Back to the Minors; Species II; Tarzan and the Lost City.*

Centre Sunnyside—42-17 Queens Blvd. (361-6869) *The Big Hit; Lost in Space; Major League: Back to the Minors; The Odd Couple II; Paulie; Tarzan and the Lost City.*

Cinema City—183-15 Horace Harding Expy., at 183rd St., Fresh Meadows (777-FILM#592) *The Big Hit; City of Angels; Lost in Space; Paulie; The Players Club.*

Cinemart—106-03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (261-2244) *Lost in Space; Paulie; The Spanish Prisoner; Titanic; Two Girls and a Guy.*

Continental—70-20 Austin St., Forest Hills (544-1020) *Good Will Hunting; Major League: Back to the Minors; Sliding Doors; The Object of My Affection.*

Crossbay—94-11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (848-1738) *The Players Club; Scream 2; Species II.*

Crossbay II—92-10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (641-5330) *Barney's Great Adventure; The Big Hit; Lost in Space; Major League: Back to the Minors; Mercury Rising; My Giant; Tarzan and the Lost City; The Object of My Affection; Titanic.*

Elmwood—57-02 Hoffman Dr., Elmhurst (429-4770) *The Big Hit; Lost in Space; Species II; Titanic.*

Forest Hills—107-16 Continental Ave., at Queens Blvd. (261-7866) *As Good As It Gets; Barney's Great Adventure; City of Angels.*

Fresh Meadows—Eastbound Service Road, at 190th St. (777-FILM#619) *Mercury Rising; The Odd Couple II; Scream 2; Species II; Suicide Kings; Tarzan and the Lost City; The Object of My Affection; Titanic.*

Jackson Triplex—82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (478-6777) *The Big Hit; Lost in Space; Titanic.*

Main Street Cinemas—72-66 Main St. (263-4828) *Barney's Great Adventure; City of Angels; Lost in Space; The Odd Couple II; Paulie; The Object of My Affection; Wild Things.*

Midway—108-22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (261-8572) *Closed for renovations.*

Movieworld—242-02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (423-7200) *The Big Hit; City of Angels; Lost in Space; Mercury Rising; Paulie; Species II; The Object of My Affection; Titanic.*

North Shore Towers—27-10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (229-7702) *The Odd Couple II.*

Plaza—103–14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (639-0012) *Tarzan and the Lost City; Titanic.*

The Movies at Bayside—38-39 Bell Blvd., at 39th Ave. (225-7711) *The Odd Couple II; Paulie; The Object of My Affection; Titanic.*

Trylon—98-81 Queens Blvd., at 66th Ave., Rego Park (459-8944) *The Odd Couple II.*

Staten Island

Area Code 718

Atrium—680 Arthur Kill Rd., nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (317-8300) *Barney's Great Adventure; City of Angels; Good Will Hunting; Grease; Lost in Space; Major League: Back to the Minors; Mercury Rising; My Giant; Paulie; Species II; The Object of My Affection.*

Hylan Plaza—107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (351-0805) *City of Angels; Lost in Space; Major League: Back to the Minors; My Giant; Paulie; The Object of My Affection.*

The Movies at Staten Island—141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (983-9600) *Barney's Great Adventure; The Big Hit; City of Angels; Lost in Space; Major League: Back to the Minors; Mercury Rising; The Odd Couple II; Paulie; The Players Club; Scream 2; Species II; Tarzan and the Lost City; The Object of My Affection; Titanic; Two Girls and a Guy.*

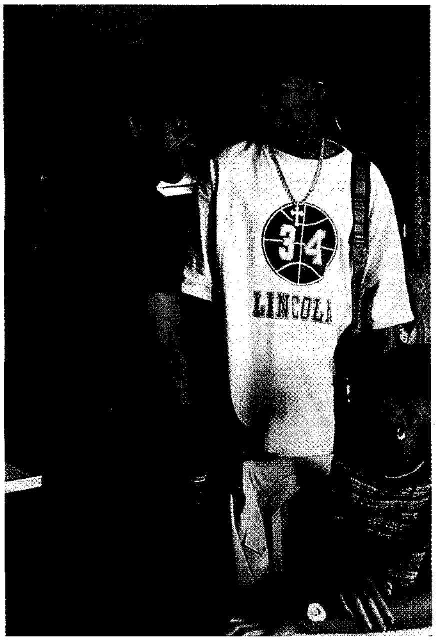
Museums, Societies, Etc.

American Museum of the Moving Image—5/2–6/28: "Indie New York: A 35-Film Survey." 5/2: *Little Fugitive* (1953), *Weddings and Babies* (1960) and "Pinewood Dialogue with Morris Engel." 5/3: *True Love* (1989) and *Household Saints* (1993). 36-01 35th Ave., Astoria, Queens (718-784-0077); nonmembers, $8; members, free.

Anthology Film Archives—Through 4/30: *Pereira Declares* (1995). 4/29–4/30: *Bullet on a Wire* (1997). 4/28: *Der Nachbar* (The Neighbor) (1992). 4/28–4/29: *A Nest of Gentlefolk* (1969). 4/29–4/30: "American Premiere." *In the Land of Cinema Veterans: A Film Expedition Around Dziga Vertov* (1996). 4/30–5/2: "Films by Bill Morrison." 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110); $7.

Opening
Oedipus Nets

In Spike Lee's drama 'He Got Game,' Denzel Washington is a neglectful father who must let go of his own would-have, should-have dreams of glory and persuade his talented, angry son (played by Milwaukee Buck Ray Allen, center) to do the smart thing—choose the NCAA over the NBA. Starts Friday, May 1.



Photograph by David Lee/Touchstone Pictures.

Brooklyn Museum of Art—"African Film Festival." 5/2: *Rouch in Reverse* (1995), *In Search of Africa* (1997), and *Fools* (1997). Africa Dreaming (shorts): *The Last Picture* (1997), *So Be It* (1997), *The Black and the White* (1997), *Mamlambo* (1997), *The Gaze of the Stars* (1997), and *Sophia's Homecoming* (1997). 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000, ext. 230); $6; $4 for members, students, and senior citizens.

Different Light—5/3: *The Wimmer* (1968). 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850); free.

Donnell Media Center—"Blue Collar Blues: Labor Documentaries." 4/30: *Harlan County, U.S.A.* (1976). "We Are Not Alone!" 4/29: *Independence Day* (1996). 20 W. 53rd St. (621-0619); free.

Film Society of Lincoln Center (The Walter Reade Theater)—"A Passage to Argentina." 4/29–4/30: *End of Innocence* (1956) and *The Fall* (1959). 5/2–5/3: *Wake Up Love* (1996) and *Martin (Hache)* (1997) 5/3 and 5/5: *Return to the Nest* (1938). 5/4–5/5: *Three Times Ana* (1961) and *Gaucho* (1954). 5/5 and 5/9: *Yellow Flowers in the Window* (1961). "Movies for Kids." 5/2–5/3: *Imuhar* (1997). "Silents from NYU: Toons, Tunes, and Trikfims." 5/1: Thirteen silents, with live accompaniment. Call 875-5601 for info. 65 W. 65th St., plaza level (875-5600); $8.50.

French Institute—"Avignon/New York Film Festival." Through 5/3: Various French and American films, including *Affliction* (1998) and *Too Tired to Die* (1997). "Ciné-club." 5/5: *Les Guichets du Louvre* (1974) and *Journal de Rivesaltes* (1996). Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160); $7, festival tickets $8.

Gen Art Film Festival—4/29: *Six Ways to Sunday.* (Lincoln Square). 4/30: *2x4.* 5/1: *Modulations.* 5/2: *Hands on a Hardbody.* 5/3: *The Farmhouse.* 5/4: *Anima. Six Ways to Sunday* screens at Lincoln Square; all others, Directors Guild Theater (110 W. 57th St.). Call 462-9444 for info. Tickets $15–$40.

Guggenheim Museum—"Dawn: Early Chinese Cinema." 4/29 and 5/2: *Spring in the South* (1932) and *Wild Rose* (1932). 5/1 and 5/3: *Daybreak* (1933) and *Spring Silkworms* (1933). 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (423-3587).

Japan Society—"Bakumatsu: A Time of Turmoil." 5/1: *Sword of Doom* (1966). 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015); $5 members, $7.50 nonmembers, students, and senior citizens.

Museum of Modern Art—"Baby It's Cold Outside: Films From Finland." 5/1 and 5/3: *Stolen Death* (1938). 5/1: *Christmas in the Distance* (1997) and *Take Care of Your Scarf, Tatjana* (1994). 5/2: *People in the Summer Night* (1948), *Traveling in the Arctic* (1917), *Drifting Clouds* (1997), and *Tigrero: A Film That Was Never Made* (1994). 5/3: *Juha* (1937). "Mystery." 4/30: *True Confessions* (1981). 4/28 and 4/30: *Reversal of Fortune* (1990). "New Documentaries." 4/30–5/1: *Sick Buildings? Sick People!* (1994) and *EPA Poisons EPA: My Sister's Story* (1997). "The Unknown Alain Delon." 5/1–5/2: *Any Number Can Win* (1963). 5/1 and 5/3: *Pour la Peau d'un Flic* (1981). 5/1 and 5/4: *Our Story* (1984). 5/2 and 5/4: *Casanova's Return* (1992). 5/3: *L'Eclisse* (1962). 5/7–5/8: *Three Men to Destroy* (1980) and *Mr. Klein* (1976). "Eisenstein: The Centenary Year." 5/5: *Alexander Nevsky* (1938). "Big as Life: An American History of 8mm Films." 5/7: Films by Boston-based director Pelle Lowe. 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9400); free with $9.50 admission.

Symphony Space—"The Envelope Please: 50 Years of Foreign Film and the Academy awards." 4/28: *Amarcord* (1974) and *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* (1988). 5/5: *Kagemusha* (1980). 2537 Broadway, at 96th St. (864-5400); $8, $5 members.

The Screening Room—Weekends at midnight: *Valley of the Dolls* (1967). Sunday brunch: *Valley of the Dolls* and *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961). 54 Varick St., below Canal St. (334-2100); $8 ($5 for Sunday brunch patrons).

YWCA Cine-Club—"A Celebration of Japanese Cinema." 5/2–5/3: *There Was a Father* (1942). 610 Lexington Ave., at 53rd St. (735-9717); $5 members, $6 nonmembers.

art

Tina Barney...Robert Overby

Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Caio Fonseca—Recent abstract paintings; through 5/9. Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (794-0550).

Stephen Hannock—New landscape paintings; through 5/9. Graham, 1014 Madison Ave. (535-5767).

Richard Hickam—Figurative paintings; through 5/22. Stone, 113 E. 90th St. (988-6870).

Howard Hodgkin—New paintings that hover between abstraction and figuration and make subtle references to the artist's travels and friendships; 5/1–6/13. Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave. (744-2313).

Per Kirkeby—Bronze models and works on paper; through 5/30. Werner, 21 E. 67th St. (988-1623).

John La Farge—Paintings made while the artist was traveling in the Pacific in the late 1800s; 4/30–6/8. Jordan, 958 Madison Ave. (570-9500).

Albert Marquet—Paintings by the French artist (1875–1947), who was involved in the Fauve movement and exhibited at the Salon d'Automne in 1905, including figures, interiors, and scenes from his journeys through Europe and North Africa; through 5/23. Wildenstein, 19 E. 64th St. (879-0500).

Joan Snyder—Recent paintings that draw on the artist's early "stroke" paintings and on her autobiographical works of the eighties; through 6/12. Hirschl & Adler Modern, 21 E. 70th St. (535-8810).

Albert York—A loan exhibition of paintings and drawings; through 6/12. Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St. (838-0333).

57th Street Area

James Barsness—New large-scale paintings that incorporate pages taken from comics and coloring books and make references to art history and popular culture; through 5/9. Adams, 41 W. 57th St. (644-5665).

William Beckman/Kent Bellows—Figurative drawings by both; through 5/9. Forum, 745 Fifth Ave. (355-4545).

Claudio Bravo/Richard Diebenkorn—New paintings by the Chilean artist, including classical still lifes, portraits, and interiors/A survey of prints, from the artist's figurative works of the early sixties to his abstract works of the eighties; 4/29–5/30. Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (541-4900).

Sam Cady—Paintings of architecture on shaped canvases; through 5/22. Ryan, 24 W. 57th St. (397-0669).

Gordon Cook—A survey of prints and paintings of atmospheric landscapes and seascapes by this artist (1927–1985) who worked in San Francisco for most of his career; 5/1–29. Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St. (888-1122).

Jane Freilicher—Recent paintings of views seen from the artist's Greenwich Village studio windows and of the countryside surrounding her studio in Water Mill, Long Island; through 5/29. De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave. (262-5050).

Philip Grausman—Figurative sculptures and drawings from the seventies, eighties, and nineties; through 5/30. Ice, 5 E. 57th St. (838-5752).

Marsden Hartley—An exhibition of 25 paintings executed between 1907 and 1942 that focuses on the artist's search for spiritual subject matter; through 6/20. Babcock, 724 Fifth Ave. (767-1852).

Alfredo Jaar—A sculptural and architectural environment and a series of photographs with accompanying text from the artist's "Rwanda Project 1994–1980"; 5/2–6/13. Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (315-0470).

Polly Kraft/Warren Brandt—Recent paintings and watercolors of still life and landscapes/Ink drawings and pastels of the female nude; 4/30–5/30. Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. (759-2345).

Howard Lerner—Paintings by this artist, who studied with Philip Guston, and a selection of works by Guston from the seventies; 4/29–6/20. Whalen, 24 W. 57th St. (397-9700).

Richard Marquis—Recent glass sculptures; through 5/9. Franklin Parrasch, 20 W. 57th St. (246-5360).

George Negroponte—Recent abstract paintings; through 5/23. McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. (319-1996).

Isamu Noguchi—A selection of basalt and granite sculptures and fountains that were made by the artist in the eighties at his studio on the Japanese island of Shikoku, many of which have not been exhibited outside of Japan; 5/1–6/26. PaceWildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. (421-3292).

Tom Shannon—Recent sculptures that combine stone, metals, permanent magnets, and other natural materials and are conceived to have minimal contact with their supporting surfaces; 4/30–6/13. Yoshii, 20 W. 57th St. (265-8876).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Chantal Akerman—The Belgian filmmaker's first show in a gallery, a six-part film installation titled *Selfportrait/Autobiography: a work in progress*; 5/1–6/13. Kelly, 43 Mercer St. (343-2405)

Assunta Sera—Paintings of scenes in New York; through 5/28. Ingbar, 568 Broadway (334-1100).

Jean-Michel Basquiat—A selection of the late artist's paintings from the eighties; through 5/30. Shafrazi, 119 Wooster St. (274-9300).

Mel Bochner—Drawings between 1966 and 1973 that depict verbal constructions, arrangements of numerals, geometric diagrams, and plans for installations; through 6/6. Markey, 55 Vandam St. (627-4446).

Reg Butler—Unique painted figurative bronze sculptures that were executed by the British artist (1913–1981) between 1963 and 1973 and were last exhibited in the United States at Pierre Matisse Gallery in 1973; 5/2–6/20. Kent, 67 Prince St. (966-4500).

Robert Colescott—Recent paintings by this artist known for his satirical allegories on race and gender; through 5/31. Kind, 136 Greene St. (925-1200).

Jason Dodge—Eight autonomous sculptures, each of which evokes a different mode of twentieth-century design, but when together form an esoteric narrative; through 5/23. Kaplan, 48 Greene St. (226-6131).

Valentina DuBasky—Large-scale fresco paintings with incised botanical and fossil forms; through 5/16. Pelavin, 13 Jay St. (925-9424).

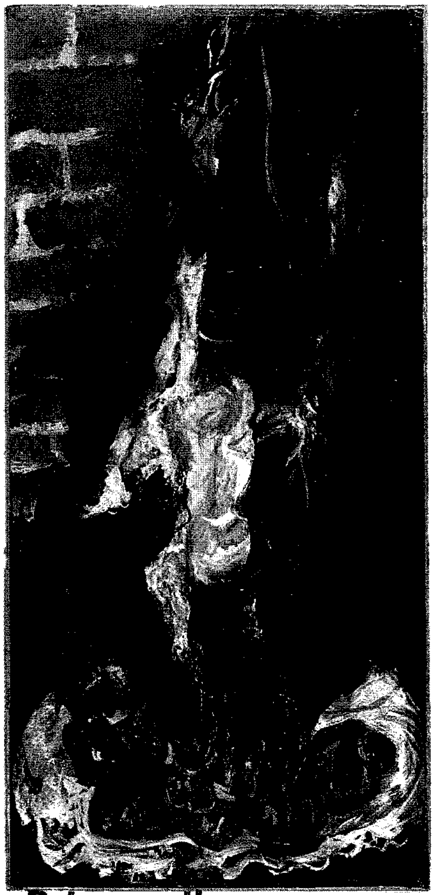
Helmut Federle—Recent large-scale abstract paintings; through 5/31. Blum, 99 Wooster St. (343-0441).

Walton Ford—Recent watercolors; through 5/23. Kasmin, 74 Grand St. (219-3219).

James Gilroy—Recent figurative paintings; 5/2–30. Dactyl Foundation, 64 Grand St. (219-2344).

Susanna Heller—Recent paintings and drawings that evoke aerial views of urban landscapes; through 5/23. Ross, 568 Broadway (343-2161).

Robert Irwin—Early abstract paintings from the fifties



Retrospective L'Chaim

Was the Lithuanian-born painter Chaim Soutine (1893–1943) an Expressionist, a primitive, a *peintre maudit* ("painter under a curse"), or a profoundly religious artist? Or was he a liminal figure, caught between cultures and various Parisian artistic camps? These are just a few of the labels previously stuck on him and now intelligently disputed in the catalogue essays for the Jewish Museum's newly opened retrospective, "An Expressionist in Paris: The Paintings of Chaim Soutine" (1109 Fifth Avenue; through August 16), the first major New York exhibition of the artist's work since the one held by MOMA in 1950. But no one is likely to argue the plainspoken opinion offered by an American art critic in 1951. "He was," wrote Clement Greenberg, "one of the most painterly painters there ever were." **EDITH NEWHALL**

Photograph courtesy of the Jewish Museum, New York.

and sixties and acrylic discs from the sixties by this California artist who turned away from painting in 1969 to become one of the creators of pure perceptual art and whose latest installation is currently on view at the Dia Center for the Arts (see "Museums"); 5/1–6/19. PaceWildenstein, 142 Greene St. (431-9224).

Wolfgang Laib—An installation of ziggurat-like forms of beeswax that fills the gallery from floor to ceiling and conceals various architectural details, and a seven-foot-long marble sculpture in the shape of a house surrounded by mounds of white rice; 5/2–6/6. Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. (431-3685).

George Lappas—Recent sculptures that play with scale and volume to create luminous fields; through 5/23. Lehmann Maupin, 39 Greene St. (965-0753).

Sam Messer—New paintings that continue the artist's exploration of figurative portraiture, including a series of symbolic self-portraits; 5/2–6/13. Beitzel, 102 Prince St. (219-2863).

Eleanor Miller—Panel paintings of flowers, seed pods, fruits, and other natural objects; through 5/10. Dillon, 431 W. Broadway (966-2977).

Yong Soon Min—Sculpture and photographs by a California-based artist that continue her exploration of the ongoing conflict and division in her native Korea; through 6/27. Art in General, 79 Walker St. (219-0473).

Catherine Murphy—Recent paintings and drawings of objects in settings that are often physically constructed, then painted from observation; through 5/22. Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway (941-0012).

Izhar Patkin—New large-scale works on paper that depict three successive generations of the Mendelssohn family of Berlin, who were victims of King Frederick II's plan in 1769 to fund his inferior porcelain company by forcing Jews to buy its low-quality products, and stenciled imagery of porcelain objects; 5/2–6/13. Solomon, 172 Mercer St. (941-5777).

Joseph Raffael—A survey of paintings and watercolors from the seventies to the present; through 5/13. Hoffman, 429 W. Broadway (966-6676).

Paul Henry Ramirez—New paintings that combine geometric shapes with the artist's signature drips, swirls, and pools of color; through 5/16. Golden, 39 Wooster St. (274-0080).

Rodney Ripps/Susan Wides—Recent paintings that employ words as suggestive images/Photographs of landscapes. Through 5/23. Foster, 62 Crosby St. (966-9024).

David Scher—An installation of photographs, paintings, sculpture, video, and computer imagery; through 5/16. Tilton, 49 Greene St. (941-1775).

David Smith—The artist's late painted steel sculptures dating from 1960 to 1964; through 5/23. Gagosian, 136 Wooster St. (228-2828).

Doug and Mike Starn—Photo collages in illuminated vitrines, video sculptures, and a sound-installation collaboration with the New York City music house Tom and Andy; 5/2–6/6. Castelli, 420 W. Broadway (431-5160).

David Stern—Gestural abstract paintings; through 5/30. Rosenberg + Kaufman, 115 Wooster St. (431-4838).

Jessica Stockholder—New works on paper from the artist's "Turning Paper" series that were produced at Two Palms Press in New York; 4/30–6/5. Senior, 375 W. Broadway (941-0960).

Judith Streeter—Mixed-media tableaux that use photographic plates as a base; 5/2–6/9. Haller, 560 Broadway (219-2500).

Ken Tisa—Rugs based on the artist's paintings of metaphysical images; through 5/9. Knobkerry, 211 W. Broadway (925-1865).

Photography Face to Face

Look carefully at Tina Barney's recent color portraits of her family and friends (below, 'Jill and I'), and you'll detect homages to such masters of the genre as James McNeil Whistler, Thomas Eakins, Paul Strand, and Chuck Close. At Janet Borden, 560 Broadway; through May 16.

Photograph by Tina Barney, courtesy of Janet Borden, Inc.

Cindy Tower—An installation of assemblages and paintings on the subject of Americana; through 5/23. Sorokko, 430 W. Broadway (941-8888).

Alan Van Every—Expressionistic impasto paintings; through 5/30. Lee, 377 Broome St. (343-3950).

Robert Yarber—Computer-assisted paintings of figures in eerily lit landscapes; 5/2–6/3. Sonnabend, 420 W. Broadway (966-6160).

Chelsea

Siah Armajani—Park furniture and "City Center" drawings; through 5/13. Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. (633-6999).

Liesbeth Bik and Jos van der Pol—An installation by two Dutch artists that is a re-creation of the theory section of the ICA bookshop in London; through 6/30. Greene Naftali, 526 W. 26th St. (463-7770).

Vincent Bizien—Large-scale works on paper whose imagery is drawn from word games and the idea of the chimera, an imaginary creature that is half-human, half-animal; through 5/23. Au base, 433 W. 14th St. (414-0563).

Jimbo Blachly/Bill Smart—An installation of hanging sheets of paper that have been painted with horizontal stripes/Geometric abstract paintings. Through 5/9. Harris, 529 W. 20th St. (463-9666).

Marsha Cottrell/Wayne Gonzales—Drawings that reference maps, diagrams, and cosmological structures/Acrylic paintings generated by the element of chance inherent in the use of random computer effects. Through 5/23. Eller, 529 W. 20th St. (206-6411).

Betty Goodwin—A selection of sculpture from the past four decades; through 5/16. Shainman, 513 W. 20th St. (645-1701).

Anish Kapoor—Two monumental sculptures, including *Turning the world inside out*, a globe-shaped work with a mirrored surface and receding, concave center; through 5/22. Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. (206-9300).

Ellsworth Kelly—Seven recent paintings on shaped canvases, each painted in a single color, 5/1–6/20, at Marks, 523 W. 24th St. (243-0200), and his 104-part anodized-aluminum work from 1957, *Sculpture for a Large Wall, 1957*, 5/1–6/20, at Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. (243-0200).

Win Knowlton—Recent sculptures, including a bank of clouds made with galvanized steel and papier-maché birds arranged on oriental rugs; through 5/9. Maynes, 529 W. 20th St. (741-3318).

Janice Krasnow—Two series of text paintings composed of various descriptions of the human body; through 5/23. Martz, 529 W. 20th St. (206-3686).

Ree Morton—Celastic works and drawings that were made by the artist (1936–1977) between 1974 and 1977 and focus on her interest in subjects related to nature and her use of celastic, a plasticlike material that can be molded into shapes; 4/30–6/6. Alexander and Bonin, 132 Tenth Ave. (367-7474).

Robert Motherwell—A selection of prints and drawings; through 5/5. Kempner, 501 W. 23rd St. (206-6872).

Robert Overby—Five latex casts of architectural elements in an abandoned house that were made by the artist in 1971; through 5/2. Fredericks, 504 W. 22nd St. (633-6555).

Alan Rath—Electronic sculptures; 5/1–6/6. Dorfman Projects, 529 W. 20th St. (352-2272).

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Feigen—49 E. 68th St. (628-0100). Paintings by the sixteenth-century Italian masters Artemisia Gentileschi, Orazio Gentileschi, and Agostino Tasso; 4/29–6/13.

Gray—1018 Madison Ave. (472-8787). "Painting and Sculpture in the Post War Period"; through 5/30.

Hirschl & Adler—21 E. 70th St. (535-8810). "Eccentric Orbits," with works by Hayter, Howard, Merrild, Sage; through 5/29.

MMC Gallery—221 E. 71st St. (517-0475). "Get Close," with works by Benzing, Hutchison, Liddell, Siegel, Umbrico, guest-curated by Ann Schoenfeld; through 5/16.

Sculpture Center—167 E. 69th St. (879-3500). "Here and Now," an exhibition of emerging artists with works by Beech, Grotepass, Harle, Kotik; 4/30–5/30.

Shapolsky—152 E. 65th St. (452-1094). "Earthly Delights," with works by Johnson, Miles, Slonem, Waitzkin; through 5/31.

Ubu—16 E. 78th St. (794-4444). "Polish Avant-Garde, 1920–1945," with work in various media from the Formist, Constructivist, Blok, and Unist movements; through 5/16.

57th Street Area

Baron/Boisanté Editions—50 W. 57th St. (581-9191). "Actionism," films and photographs of "actions" by artists who participated in the Viennese Actionism movement of the sixties, among them Brus, Muehl, Nitsch, and Schwarzkogler; through 6/13.

Boone—745 Fifth Ave. (752-2929). An exhibition guest-curated by Klaus Kertess, with works by Andresen, Mayerson, Nelson, others; through 5/9.

Rosenfeld—24 W. 57th St. (247-0082). "Defining the Edge: Early American Abstraction," with works by Bengelsdorf, Browne, Drewes, Glarner, others; through 5/30.

St. Etienne—24 W. 57th St. (245-6734). "TABOO: Sex and Sin in Modern Art," with works by Attie, Coe, Dix, Heckel, others; through 5/30.

Spanierman—45 E. 58th St. (832-0208). American watercolor paintings from the past 125 years, with works by Burchfield, Cropsey, Demuth, Hassam, others; through 5/30.

SoHo and TriBeCa

Dieu Donné Papermill —433 Broome St. (226-0573). "Paper +," with works by Amoros, Anastasi, Antonakos, Artschwager; through 5/29.

Dorsky—379 W. Broadway (966-6170). "Drawing the Question," part two of an exhibition intended to present the seminal role of drawing in the creative process and expression of vision, with works by Asher, Hesse, Morton, LeWitt, Pepe and Tuttle; through 6/20.

Feature Inc.—76 Greene St. (941-7077). Paintings by Alix Brown, photographs by Justen Ladda, and a selection of contemporary Indian Tantric paintings on paper; 5/2–6/6.

Gering—476 Broome St. (226-8195). "Formulations" explores the trajectory of "systems" art, with works by Darboven, LeWitt, Simon; through 5/23.

Gibson—568 Broadway (925-1192). "Raw Ideas," drawings for large-scale projects by Adams, Beckley, Bladen, Oppenheim, others; through 5/16.

Goldstein—39 Wooster St. (431-0314). "To Believe and Not Quite to Believe," with works by Danilova, Blau, Tenberken; through 5/12.

The Swiss Institute—495 Broadway (925-2035). An exhibition exploring common assumptions about art and systems of representation, with works by artists based in Zurich, Berlin and New York; through 5/19.

TZ' Art & Co.—28 Wooster St. (966-9059). "Memory," with paintings, sculpture, drawings, and photographs by Armando, Hafif, McConaughy, McGill, Sterck and Rozo; through 5/16.

Wooster Gardens—558 Broadway (941-6210). "Micro Organism," contemporary jewelry from Germany, with works by Atrops, Betz, Dittlmann, Fritsch, others; 4/30–5/30.

Chelsea

Audiello Fine Art—526 W. 26th St. (675-9082). "The Innocent," with works by Collins, Guerin, Schanck, and Sue Hoy; 5/2–5/30.

Cheim & Reid—521 W. 23rd St. (242-7727). "Three Catholics: Warhol, Ruscha & Mapplethorpe," paintings, photography and sculpture; through 6/27.

Morthland—225 Tenth Ave. (242-7767). "Inventors + Alchemists," an exhibition of surreal and conceptual photographs, objects, and paintings with works by Beube, Diaz, Estabrook, Hajdu; 5/1–6/14.

Tonkonow—601 W. 26th St. (255-8450). "Disappearing Act," with works by Byars, Roth, Warhol, Weiner, others; through 8/1.

TransHudson—416 W. 13th St. (242-3232). "Gothic Distress," guest-curated by Karin Giusti, with works by Del Rivero, Olbert, Pensato, Stork, others; through 5/9.

Wessel and O'Connor—242 W. 26th St. (242-8811). "The Body in Question," photographs by artists from Sydney and New York, including screen prints and large-format color work; through 5/10.

Other

McCready—425 W. 13th St. (243-0439). Botanical works by Kelly, Freud, Mapplethorpe, and Warhol; through 5/23.

White Columns—320 W. 13th St. (924-4212). "Inventory," an investigation of how artwork serves as a recording device, with works by Baum, Bennet, Corbin, Edwards, others; through 5/24.

Photography

Tina Barney—New large-format color photographs of the artist's friends and family, and a video, *Rhode Island Summer*, through 5/16. Borden, 560 Broadway (431-0166).

Ilse Bing—Photographs made in Frankfurt in the late twenties and in New York in the thirties, drawn from the photographer's personal collection; through 5/9. Houk, 745 Fifth Ave. (750-7070).

Lois Conner/Ed Burtyńsky—A survey of the photographer's platinum panoramics of China/Color photographs made at mineral-tailing sites and industrial recycling plants in Ontario. Through 5/30. Miller, 138 Spring St. (226-1220).

Danziger—851 Madison Ave. (734-5300). Seminal works by Peter Hujar, Joel Meyerowitz, and Milton Greene, many of which have not been previously exhibited; through 5/9.

Barbara Ess—New large-scale color photographs that muse on the relationship between nature and domestic order; through 5/22. Marcus, 578 Broadway (226-3200).

Sally Gall—New photographs that record the artist's state of mind during a six-week sojourn at an artists' colony in the Grenadines; through 5/22. Saul, 560 Broadway (431-0747).

Gat—1100 Madison Ave. (327-0441). Film stills and action photographs by the Viennese Actionists Kurt Kren, Otto Muhl, Guenther Brus, Rudolph Schwarzkogler, others; through 5/31.

ICP—1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (860-1777), Tues. 11–8 (voluntary contribution 6–8), Wed.–Sun. 11–6; $5.50, $4 students and seniors. "Micha Bar-Am: An Israeli Photobiography." Images of life in Israel by its premier photojournalist; through 5/31.

ICP Midtown—1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. (860-1777), Tues. 11–8 (6–8 admission by voluntary donation), Wed.–Sun. 11–6; $5.50, $4. "Robert Capa/Photographs." A retrospective of the legendary photojournalist (1913–1954) known for his images of the Spanish Civil War, the North African and European battles of WWII, the Israeli War for Independence, and the end of the French Indochina War, and for his portraits of artists and writers; through 6/7.

Bob Mitchell—Polaroid transfers of the artist's miniature architectural models; through 5/23. Bridgewater/Lustberg, 560 Broadway (941-6355).

Warren Neidich—Large-scale color photographs taken in the summer of 1995 when the photographer followed the trans-American route of Sal Paradise, the main character of Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*; through 5/16. Abrams, 177 E. 71st St. (535-9430).

Bastienne Schmidt—Photographic installations of images from the artist's photographic essay-book *American Dreams*; through 6/6. Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st St. (223-1059).

Cindy Sherman—New photographs from which the artist is absent, instead depicting traces of body parts strewn across dirt, or, in a nearly abstract series, rotting food, shards of broken plates, and scattered silverware; through 5/16. Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. (206-7100).

Gerald Slota—Mixed-media photographs of surreal environments; through 5/23. Ricco/Maresca, 529 W. 20th St. (627-4819).

Antonio Turok—Photographs recording the artist's experiences in the Mexican state of Chiapas, from the new book, *Chiapas: The End of Silence* (Aperture; $40); through 6/21. Aperture's Burden Gallery, 20 E. 23rd St. (505-5555).

Museums

American Craft Museum—"Paper + Finland = Art." Works on paper by contemporary Finnish artists; through 5/10. . . . "Expressions in Wood: Masterworks From the Wornick Collection." Turned and shaped wood artworks by 56 artists from the United States, Europe, and Australia, drawn from the collection of Anita and Ron Wornick; through 5/10. 40 W. 53rd St. (956-3535); Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 10–6, Thurs. till 8 (pay as you wish 6–8); $5, $2.50 students and seniors.

American Museum of Natural History—"Spirits in Steel: The Art of the Kalabari Masquerade." Life-size steel sculptures by Sokari Douglas Camp that were inspired by the traditional masquerades of the Kalabari people of the Eastern Niger Delta, and masks from the collections of the American Museum of Natural History and the British Museum; through 10/12. . . . "The Nature of Diamonds." An exhibition exploring all aspects of the mineral, from its geological origins to its place in history, art, adornment, and literature, featuring significant gems from around the world; through 8/30. . . . "Drawing Shadows to Stone: Photographing North Pacific Peoples, 1897–1902." A commemoration of the American Museum of Natural History's Jesup North Pacific Expedition of 1897–1902, including approximately 100 archival photographs of scenes from daily life; through 5/31. Central Park West at 79th St. (769-5100); Sun.–Thurs. 10–5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10–8:45; $8 suggested contribution, $6 students and seniors, $4.50 children.

Ground Rules:

Galleries are generally open Mon. through Fri. from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

Asia Society—"Great Cities, Small Treasures: The Ancient World of the Indus Valley." Over 100 examples of sculpture, ceramics, metalwork, seals, and other artifacts made by inhabitants of the Indus River Valley between 2600 B.C.E. and 1900 B.C.E., drawn primarily from collections in Pakistan; through 5/3. . . . "More Than Meets the Eye: Japanese Art in the Asia Society Collection"; through 8/16. 725 Park Ave., at 70th St. (517-ASIA), Tues.–Sat. 11–6, Sun. 12–5, Thurs. 11–8 (6–8 free admission); $4, $2 seniors and students.

Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts—"Finnish Modernism in Design: Utopian Ideals and Everyday Ideals, 1930–1997." A survey of works produced by Finnish designers for the ceramics firm Arabia, the glass factories of iittala, Karhula, and Nuutajarvi, and the textile and clothing manufacturer Marimekko; through 6/14. 18 W. 86th St. (501-3000), Tues.–Sun. 11–5 (Thurs. to 8); $2, $1 seniors and students.

Bronx Museum of the Arts—"Tomie Arai: Double Trouble"; through 8/23. . . . "Rimer Cardillo: Araucaria"; through 8/23..."1898: Artists Respond"; through 6/21.1040 Grand Concourse, Bronx (718-681-6000), Wed. 3–9, Thurs. and Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 1–6; $3 suggested donation; $2 students; $1 senior citizens, children under 12 free.

Brooklyn Museum of Art—"Jewels of the Romanovs: Treasures of the Russian Imperial Court." 250 objects and works of art spanning three centuries of the Romanov Dynasty, among them royal portraits, court gowns, military uniforms, and a selection of Crown Jewels; through 7/5. . . . "Masters of Color and Light: Homer, Sargent, and the American Watercolor Movement." Approximately 150 works by the American masters drawn entirely from the museum's permanent collection; through 7/5. . . . "Mexican Prints From the Collection of Reba and Dave Williams." 126 prints by 47 Mexican artists, among them José Orozco, Diego Rivera, and Rufino Tamayo; through 8/9. . . . "Sally Victor: Mad Hatter, 1935–65." A selection of hats by the American milliner, beginning with her earliest creations of the thirties through the decline of the popularity of the hat in the mid-sixties; through 6/21. . . . "Joan Snyder: Working in Brooklyn." Works on paper from the past decade; through 6/14. . . . "Scattered Petals, Fallen Leaves, Shards of Glass: The Work of Bing Hu, Working in Brooklyn." An exhibition of sixteen sculptures that incorporate material found on the streets of Brooklyn by the Chinese artist; through 5/10. 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. 11–9, Sun. 11–6; $4, $2 students, $1.50 seniors.

Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum Smithsonian Institution—"Arquitectonica: The Times Square Project." The first New York exhibition of photographs, models, and drawings by the Miami-based architectural firm, highlighting its plans for a hotel, entertainment, and retail complex at 42nd Street and Eighth Avenue; through 5/10. 2 E. 91st St. (849-8300), Wed.–Sat. 10–5. Sun. 12–5, Tues. 10–9 (free admission 5–9); $3, $1.50 seniors and students.

Dahesh Museum—"Training an Artist: Alexandre Cabanel and the Academic Process in Nineteenth-Century France." Paintings and drawings by the nineteenth-century French artist; through 6/13. 601 Fifth Ave., at 49th St. (759-0606), Tues.–Sat. 11–6; free.

Dia Center for the Arts—"Robert Irwin." Part one of a two-part site-specific installation; through 6/14. . . . "Tracey Moffatt: *Free-falling*." A group of 25 photographs and a video installation by the Australian artist and filmmaker; through 6/14. . . . "Richard Serra: *Torqued Ellipses*." Three monumental sculptures of Cor-Ten steel that explore the shaping of space rather than material as their primary subject; through 6/14. . . . "Dan Flavin: 1962/63, 1970, 1996." Three installations using fluorescent light and six separate fluorescent works by the late sculptor; through 6/14. 548 W. 22nd St. (989-5912), Thurs.–Sun. 12–6; $4, $2 students and seniors.

The Drawing Center—"Shadows of a Hand: The Drawings of Victor Hugo." The first exhibition in the United States devoted to the drawings of the nineteenth-century French writer (1802–1885), addressing his prescient relationship to art movements of the twentieth century; through 6/13. 35 Wooster St. (219-2166), Tues.–Fri. 10–6, Sat. 11–6; donation suggested.

El Museo del Barrio—"Taíno: Pre-Columbian Art and Culture From the Caribbean." The first comprehensive survey of the art of the Taíno, the dominant culture in Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Cuba, Jamaica, and the Bahamas from about 1200 A.D. to the arrival of Columbus in 1492; through 5/3. 1230 Fifth Ave. (831-7272); Wed.–Sun. 11–5, Thurs. 12–7; $4, $2 seniors and students.

Frick Collection—1 E. 70th St. (288-0700); Tues.–Sat. 10–6, Sun. 1–6; $5, $3 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Grey Art Gallery—"Shiro Kuramata 1934–1991." Furniture and objects by one of postwar Japan's most influential designers; through 5/2. 100 Washington Square East (998-6780), Wed. 11–8, Tues., Thurs., Fri. 11–6, Sat. 11–5; $2.50 suggested donation.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum—"China: 5,000 Years." More than 500 artworks and artifacts from seventeen provinces of China; through 6/3. . . . "After *Mountains and Sea*: Frankenthaler 1956–1959." A survey of the artist's early paintings, including her groundbreaking *Mountains and Sea* of 1952, which laid the stylistic groundwork for her subsequent works; through 5/3. . . . "Visions of Paris: Robert Delauney's Series." An exhibition focusing on the artist's series paintings of Saint-Séverin, the Eiffel Tower, and Paris as seen through his window; through 5/24. 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (423-3500); Sun.–Wed. 10–6, Fri. and Sat. 10–8 (Fri. 6–8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; $12, $7 seniors and students.

Guggenheim Museum SoHo—"China: 5,000 Years"; through 5/25. 575 Broadway, at Prince St. (423-3500), Sun. and Wed.–Fri. 11–6, Sat. 11–8 (6–8 pay what you wish); $8, $5 seniors and students.

Jewish Museum—"An Expressionist in Paris: The Paintings of Chaim Soutine." The first museum exhibition devoted to the painter's work in nearly five decades, focusing on the period between Soutine's arrival in Paris in 1913 and his death there during World War II; through 8/16. . . . "Still More Distant Journeys: The Artistic Emigrations of Lasar Segall." The first major United States retrospective of the preeminent Brazilian artist, a major contributor to the development of German Expressionism and Brazilian modernist painting; through 5/10. 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (423-3200); Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11–5:45, Tues. 11–8 (Tues. after 5 free); $7, $5 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art—"Paul Strand circa 1916." An exhibition of 50 rare prints tracing the artist's transition from soft-focus pictorial style to modernism; through 5/31. . . . "Augustin Pajou, Royal Sculptor." The first comprehensive exhibition of the work of the eighteenth-century French sculptor; through 5/24. . . . "Pierre-Paul Prud'hon." The first American retrospective of the works of the eighteenth-century French court painter and draftsman; through 6/7. . . . "The Nature of Islamic Ornament, Part I: Calligraphy." An exhibition surveying the development of Islamic calligraphy; through 6/28. . . . "When Silk Was Gold: Central Asian and Chinese Textiles in the Metropolitan and Cleveland Museums of Art"; through 5/17. . . . "Evocative Fragments." A selection of twentieth-century paintings, sculptures, drawings, and photographs depicting fragments of the human body; through 6/14. . . . "Honoré Lannuier, Parisian Cabinet Maker in Federal New York"; through 6/14. . . . "Elegant China Ware: Paris Porcelain in America"; through 6/14. . . . "American Ingenuity." A survey of twentieth-century American sportswear; through 8/16. 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (879-5500); Tues.–Thurs. and Sun. 9:30–5:15, Fri. and Sat. 9:30–9; $8 contribution, $4 children and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (923-3700); Tues.–Sun. 9:30–4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September); $8, $4 seniors and students.

Museum of American Folk Art—"Self-Taught Artists of the 20th Century: Perspectives on Patterning." A survey of works by five self-taught artists whose oeuvres are characterized by a consistent use of overall patterning, including Morris Hirshfeld, Leroy Person, Martin Ramirez, Eugene Von Bruenchenhein, and Joseph Yoakum; through 6/7. 2 Lincoln Square (595-9533), Tues.–Sun. 11:30–7:30; free.

Museum of Jewish Heritage–A Living Memorial to the Holocaust—Permanent exhibitions of more than 2,000 photographs and 800 historical and cultural artifacts documenting the Jewish experience from the1880s to the present, and 24 films chronicling the memories of Holocaust survivors. 18 First Place, Battery Park City (968-1800), Sun.–Wed. 9–5, Thurs. 9–8, Fri. and eve of Jewish holidays 9–2, closed Sat. and Jewish holidays; $7, $5 students and seniors.

Museum of Modern Art—"Chuck Close." A retrospective of paintings, drawings, prints, and photographs by the American artist known for his monumental, psychologically charged portraits of artists and anonymous sitters; through 5/26. . . . "Alvar Aalto: Between Humanism and Materialism." The first United States retrospective of the works of the renowned Finnish architect, designer, and town planner, including sketches and competition drawings, models, new and archival photographs, and examples of furniture and glass; through 5/19. . . . "Fernand Léger." A retrospective of paintings and drawings by the French artist (1881–1955) from his early series "Contrastes de Formes (1913–14)," the first fully abstract works to emerge from Cubism, through his last realist paintings of construction workers of the late forties and early fifties; through 5/12. . . . "Fabrications." An exhibition developed jointly by MOMA, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and the Wexner Center for the Arts, comprising a total of twelve installations simultaneously constructed at all three venues by architects and architectural teams; through 4/28. . . . "The Clutter of Happenstance: Photographs by Robert Cumming." Photographs of ordinary objects in tableaux of the artist's devising, made between 1969 and 1981; through 6/15. . . . "Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons: Spoken Softly With Mama." A site-specific installation exploring the artist's African-Cuban roots; through 5/26. . . . "Rethinking the Modern: Three Proposals for the Museum of Modern Art." Design proposals for the expansion and renovation of the Museum of Modern Art, featuring the work of the Japanese architect Yoshio Taniguchi, who was chosen in December 1997 to design MOMA's expansion and renovation, and by the Swiss architectural firm Herzog & deMeuron, and the New York–based architect Bernard Tschumi; through 4/28. . . . "Garry Winogrand: Selections From a Major Acquisition." Twenty-six photographs from a collection of 200 prints ranging in date from the fifties through the seventies that were acquired by the museum from the New York collector; through 5/31. 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480); Sat.–Tues. 10:30–6, Thurs. 10:30–6, Fri. 10:30–8:30 (4:30–8:30 pay what you wish), closed Wed.; $9.50, $6.50 students and seniors.

Museum of the City of New York—"Broadway! The Great White Way in 1898." Photographs, costumes, manuscripts, and other memorabilia of New York's theater district of the 1890s; through 1/31. . . . "Berenice Abbott's Changing New York, 1935–1939." A selection of 175 prints from the museum's own collection of the photographer's "Changing New York" project of the thirties that was funded by the Federal Art Project of the W.P.A. and sponsored by the museum; through 6/21. . . . "Bridging New York." An exhibition of paintings, prints, drawings, postcards, and vintage photographs exploring the role played by bridges in the creation of Greater New York; through 6/28. . . . "New York From Above: An Aerial View." Paintings depicting aerial views of the city by Spelman Evans Downer; through 6/14. . . . "A Float for All Seasons: New York's Ethnic Parades." A survey of New York City's ethnic parades; through 10/17. 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (534-1672); Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 1–5; $5, $3 students and seniors.

National Academy Museum and School of Fine Arts—"Whistler: Impressions of an American Abroad—Etchings and Lithographs From the Carnegie Museum of Art." A survey of prints by the American expatriate James McNeil Whistler (1834–1903), drawn from the collection of and organized by the Carnegie Museum of Art; 5/1–6/26. 1083 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. (369-4880), Wed., Thurs., Sat., Sun. 12–5, Fri, 12–8 (Fri. 5–8 pay what you wish); $5, $3.50 seniors and students.

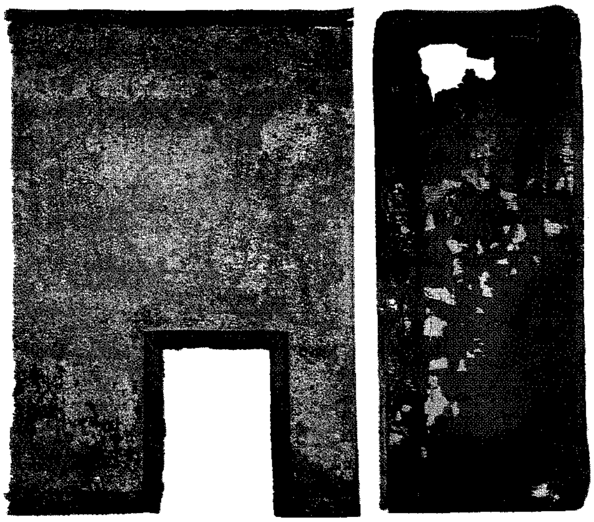
National Museum of the American Indian Smithsonian Institution—"Memory and Imagination: The Legacy of Maidu Indian Artist Frank Day." Works by the first self-taught Native American painter in California to depict customs of his tribe; through 5/3. George Gustav Heye Center, 1 Bowling Green (514-3888), 10–5 daily, Thurs. to 8; free.

New Museum of Contemporary Art—"Doris Salcedo." New sculpture by the Colombian artist; through 5/31. . . . "Cardoso Flea Circus." A miniature flea circus accompanied by a video documenting a performance piece; through 5/10. 583 Broadway (219-1222), Wed. and Sun. 12–6, Thurs., Fri., and Sat. 12–8, (free Thurs. 6–8); $5, $3 students, artists, and seniors, free for youths 18 and under.

New York Public Library—"Particular Voices: Robert Giard's Portraits of Gay and Lesbian Writers"; through 6/27. . . . "A War in Perspective, 1898–1998: Public Appeals, Memory, and the Spanish-American Conflict"; through 8/29. . . . "A Secret Location on the Lower East Side: Adventures in Writing, 1960–1980." An exhibition focusing on the writers, artists, publishers, and communities who produced publications associated with the use of the mimeograph machine from the sixties through the early eighties; through 7/25. Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (869-8089); Mon. 10–6, Tues.–Wed. 11–6, Thurs.–Sat. 10–6; free.

New-York Historical Society—"Unconventional Currier & Ives." Lesser-known works produced by the printing firm,

On View **Robert Overby, a California sculptor who died in 1993, is finally getting the attention he deserves for his latex casts of architectural elements, paintings, objects, and drawings. Overby's most ambitious project, part of which is currently on view at Jessica Fredericks Gallery (504 West 22nd Street; through May 2), was his 1971 "Barclay House" series, 27 latex casts of the charred doors, floors, and walls of an abandoned, burned-out building made by the artist over the course of a single day.**



Photographs courtesy of Jessica Fredericks Gallery.

among them prints, photographs, certificates, and advertisements; through 7/5. . . . "Militant Metropolis: New York City and the Spanish-American War 1898." A selection of newspapers, caricatures, letters, photographs, and other materials from the Society's Lathrop Colgate Harper Collection of Spanish-American War materials; through 7/12. . . . "New York Landmarks, Present and Future Direction." Photographs of New York City landmarks from the new book *Landmarks of New York III* (Abrams) by Barbaralee Diamonstein-Spielvogel; through 8/23. . . . "Paul Robeson: Bearer of a Culture." A exhibition of photographs and memorabilia commemorating the centenary of the actor's birth; through 7/12. 2 W. 77th St. (873-3400); Wed.–Sun. noon–5; $5, $3 seniors and children.

P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center—"Alex Katz—Under the Stars: American Landscapes 1951–1995." The first retrospective of the artist's landscape works; through 6/21. . . . "Vertical Painting Show"; through 6/28. . . . "Meg Webster 'Pool'"; through 6/28. 22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave. (718-784-2084), Wed.–Sun. 12–6; $4 suggested donation, $2 students and seniors.

Pierpont Morgan Library—"A Seal Upon Thine Heart: Glyptic Art of the Ancient Near East, ca. 2100–500 B.C." A selection of seals from the Library's collection and from the Yale Babylonian Collection, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and several private collections; 4/30–8/16. . . . "To Observe and Imagine: British Drawings and Watercolors, 1600–1900"; through 5/3. 29 E. 36th St. (685-0008), Tues.–Fri. 10:30–5, Sat. 10:30–6; Sun. 12–6; $6; $4 students and seniors.

Queens Museum of Art—"Robert Colescott: Recent Paintings." A survey of paintings from the past ten years that explore issues of racial identity, power, and gender by this 72-year-old African-American artist; through 8/30. . . . "Dawoud Bey." New large-scale Polaroid portraits of students from three Queens high schools; through 8/30. New York City Building, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens (718-592-9700), Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 12–5; $3, $1.50 students and seniors.

Whitney Museum of American Art—"Bill Viola." The first full-scale overview of the work of the California-based video artist, including fifteen installations, 25 videotapes, and drawings and notebooks from the past 25 years; through 5/10. . . . "Richard Pousette-Dart: The Studio Within." A partial re-creation of the studio the artist worked in for more than 30 years, including twenty paintings from different periods of his career, a selection from his collection of notebooks, and poems and small artworks; 4/29–9/13. . . . "Louise Nevelson: Structures Evolving." A selection of sculptures and works on paper from the museum's collection that highlights the artist's practice of recycling components of existing works to create new ones; 4/29–9/13. 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (570-3676); Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 11–6, Thurs. 1–8; $8, $7 students and seniors (free Thurs. 6–8).

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris—"Who What When Where: An Installation by Carrie Mae Weems"; 5/1–7/10. 120 Park Ave., at 42nd St. (878-2550), Mon.–Sat. 11–6 (Thurs. till 7:30); free.

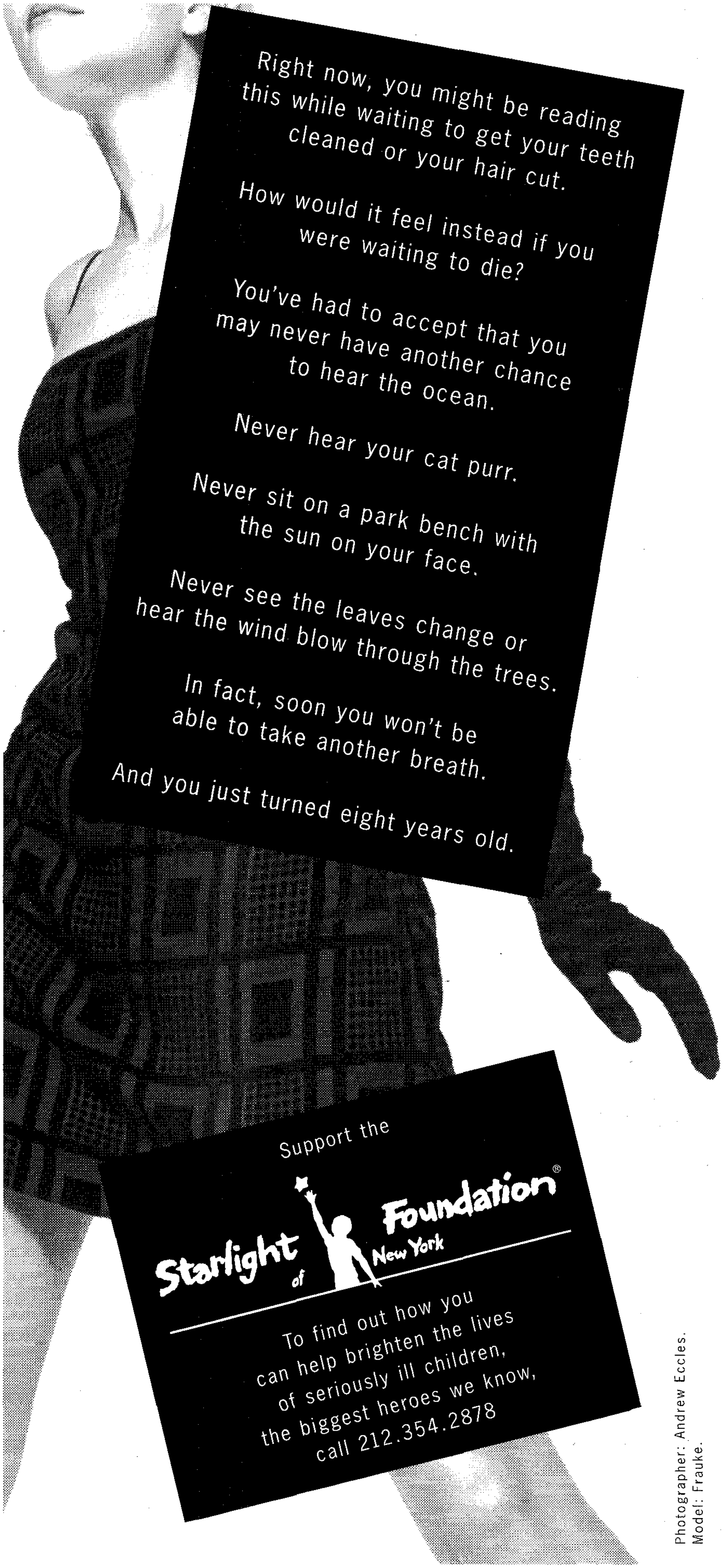
Auctions

Christie's—502 Park Ave. (546-1000). 5/5 at 7: "Impressionist and 19th-Century Art." On view from 4/30.

Christie's East—219 E. 67th St. (546-1000). 5/5 at 1: "19th-Century European Paintings." On view from 5/1.

Doyle—175 E. 87th St. (427-2730). 4/29 at 10: "Old Master, Modern, and Contemporary Prints and Posters." On view from 4/25.

Sotheby's—1334 York Ave. at 72nd St. (606-7000). 4/29 at 10:15 and 2: "18th-Century Furniture." On view from 4/24. 4/29 at 2: "Paperweights." On view from 4/24. 4/30 at 10 and 2: "Prints." On view from 4/25. 5/1 at 10 and 2: "Prints." On view from 4/25. 5/2 at 10 and 2: "Contemporary Prints." On view from 4/25.



Right now, you might be reading this while waiting to get your teeth cleaned or your hair cut.

How would it feel instead if you were waiting to die?

You've had to accept that you may never have another chance to hear the ocean.

Never hear your cat purr.

Never sit on a park bench with the sun on your face.

Never see the leaves change or hear the wind blow through the trees.

In fact, soon you won't be able to take another breath.

And you just turned eight years old.

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Liam Neeson Is Wilde...Eartha Kitt Is Wicked

Broadway

Previews and Openings

The Judas Kiss—David Hare's new play about the relationship between Oscar Wilde and his lover, Lord Alfred Douglas. Liam Neeson plays the condemned baron of bon mots; Richard Eyre directs. $15–$55. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2. In previews for a 4/29 opening. *Broadhurst Theatre, 235 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

St. Louis Woman—Johnny Mercer's 1946 musical about Della Green, a saloon broad who falls for a jockey with an improbable winning streak. Vanessa Williams stars; Jack O'Brien directs. The show is the third and final offering from City Center's irresistible Encores! series. $25–$55. Thurs. and Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 6:30. *City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (581-1212).*

The Wizard of Oz—A revival of last year's revival. As the Wicked Witch of the West, Eartha Kitt will also find herself in a role that (a) suits her vampy, campy talents and (b) plays to a more appreciative audience than reluctant taxicab passengers. Have a purrrrrrrfect evening. Rrrrreeow! $19–$59. Fri. at 11 and 7:30, Sat. at 1, 4, and 7:30, Sun. at 11, 2, and 5. Performances begin 5/1. *Theater at Madison Square Garden, Seventh Ave. and 32nd St. (307-4111).*

Now Playing

Ah, Wilderness!—This charming Eugene O'Neill comedy concerns the Miller family in a small Connecticut town. Father Nat is a newspaper editor happily married to Essie, doting mother of Arthur, a complacent Yalie; Richard, the high-school grad and authorial alter ego; Mildred, the tomboy; and Tommy, the brat. The time is July 4 and 5, 1906, and, save for fireworks bursting in air, the world is at peace. Daniel Sullivan has staged O'Neill's foray into Twain-and-Tarkington territory with style. Craig T. Nelson as the bumbling patriarch Nat and Debra Monk as the maternally conniving Essie contribute handsomely. Sam Trammell's Richard—boyishly defiant, winsomely naïve, and bottomlessly decent—offers a memorable tribute to being 17. (Simon: 4/6/98.) $45–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 5/3. *Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (239-6200).*

Art—I sympathize with this play by Yasmina Reza, which was the hit of Paris in 1995 and of London in 1996, and won awards in both cities. The plot is simple. Serge spends 200,000 francs on a five-by-four painting by the renowned Antrios that is all white except for some diagonal scratches. His friend Marc considers this Antrios shit, and Serge's purchase of it an insult to their friendship. He tries to enlist the third of our musketeers, Yvan, to side with him. But confronted with Serge and the painting, Yvan does what he does best: He wavers. Reza's cunning dialogue requires high-powered actors to animate it, and happily, it gets them. As Marc, Alan Alda puts to insidious use his ability to pester with polish. Victor Garber's dapper Serge harbors under the façade of a convivial man-about-town a defensive arrogance expressed with mounting bile. As Yvan, Alfred Molina is pure perfection. (Simon: 3/16/98.) $45–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 3/1/98. *Royale Theatre, 242 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Ground Rules:

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where discount tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0740.

Beauty and the Beast—A musical based on a movie based on a fairy tale. Setting box-office and, presumably, merchandising records even as we speak. Deborah Gibson plays the girl; Chuck Wagner plays the (hairy) boy. Lyrics by Tim Rice and Howard Ashman; music by Alan Menken. $22.50–$70. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened: 4/18/94. *Palace Theatre, 1564 Broadway, at 47th St. (307-4100).*

The Beauty Queen of Leenane—Martin McDonagh, the 28-year-old Anglo-Irish playwright with the precociously long résumé, made his American debut with this drama about an old woman's attempts to sabotage her daughter's love life. It was a huge hit at the Atlantic this spring; it now runs through 7/5 on Broadway. $20–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Walter Kerr Theatre, 219 W. 48th St. (239-6200).*

Bring In 'da Noise, Bring In 'da Funk—George C. Wolfe and Savion Glover's Tony-winning history of African-Americans as told through tap dancing, poetry, and song. $20–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs.*

Cabaret—I question converting the Henry Miller Theatre into the Kit Kat Klub for this show, complete with poorer sight lines and tables for overpriced and distracting drinks. Otherwise, the Roundabout is to be roundly applauded for recreating Sam Mendes's 1993 London production, even if with some diminishment. Aided by Rob Marshall as co-director and choreographer, Mendes confirms his directorial reputation with the nightclub scenes. Joe Masteroff's refurbished book emphasizes the squalor of 1930 Berlin nightlife and the bisexuality of Clifford, the writer hero. The major performances are all at least a mite off, but the supporting cast delivers staunchly. Natasha Richardson is—at last!—an authentically British Sally Bowles, but she is stolid, blatant, lacking in girlish vulnerability. Shortcomings notwithstanding, this revival has enough to satisfy all but the most fastidious. (Simon: 3/30/98.) $50–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Opened 3/19/98. *Kit Kat Klub, 124 W. 43rd St. (719-1300).*

Cats—Now and for the foreseeable future. By Andrew Lloyd Webber, of course, with an assist from T. S. Eliot. $37.50–$70. Mon. and Tues. at 8, Wed. at 2 and 8, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Opened: 10/7/82. *Winter Garden Theater, 1634 Broadway, at 50th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

The Chairs—This tragic Ionesco farce concerns a nonagenarian couple, caretakers of an abandoned tower on an isolated island surrounded by stagnant water. They are ready to die, and have invited everyone conceivable to hear the Old Man's testament, which he, unskilled with words, has hired the Orator to deliver for him. The guests—all invisible presences—start coming. The Old Man chats them up while the Old Woman knocks herself out dragging in seating for them. The stage fills up with more and more empty chairs. Geraldine McEwan's old woman may be a bit too singsongy, but Richard Briers's would-be debonair, self-satisfied yet insecure dotard could not be more appropriately laughable or pitiful. I disapprove of the gratuitous final transformation by the Orator; otherwise this production incises itself indelibly on those privileged to view it. (Simon: 4/20/98.) $35–$60. Mon.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8. Through 6/13. *Golden Theatre, 252 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

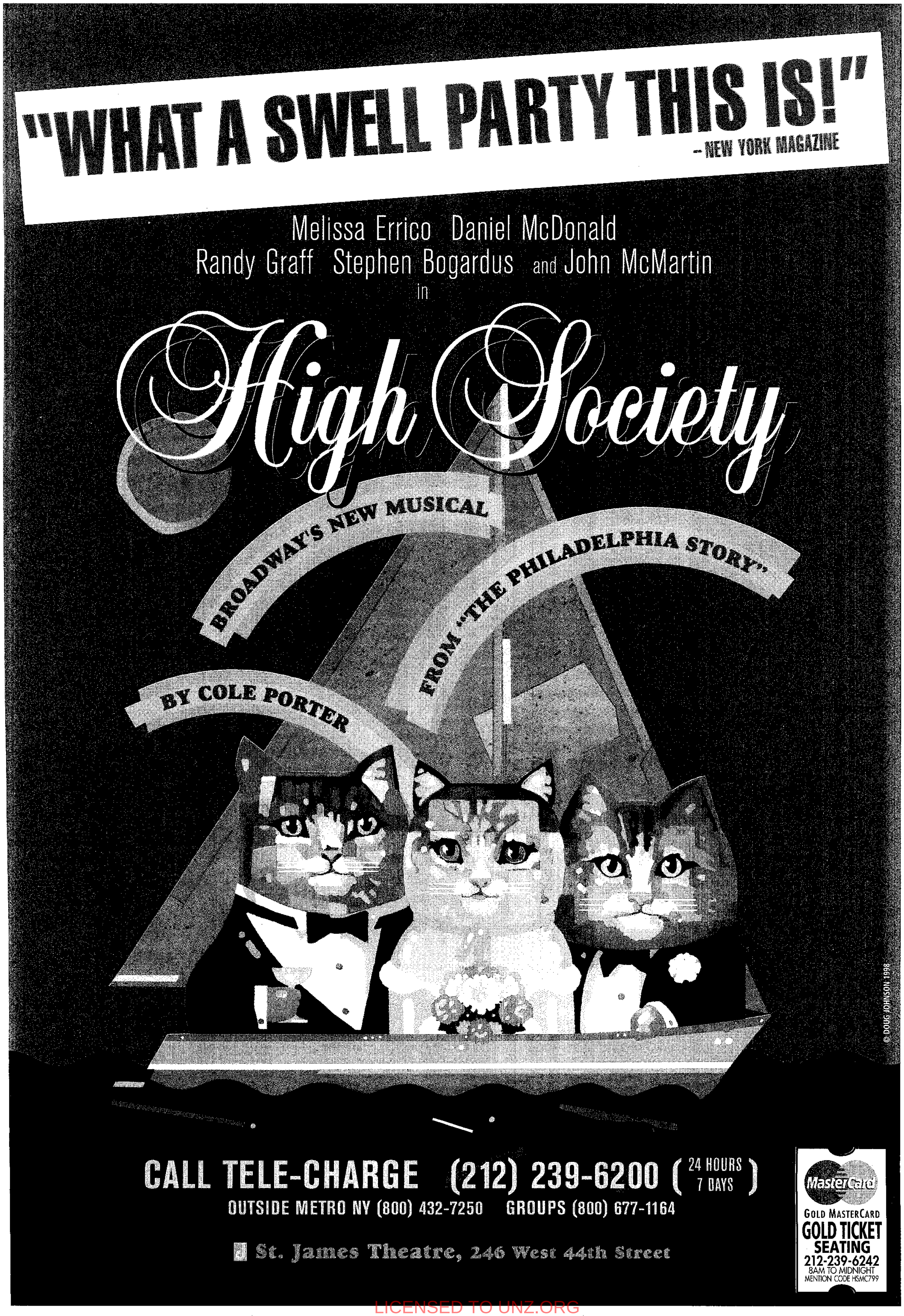
Chicago—It was a gamble to transfer the Encores! production of *Chicago* to Broadway, but since *Chicago* is about women who kill their men and the mercenary lawyer who gets them off, gambling seems like the merest peccadillo. Especially when, as here, it pays off. Bebe Neuwirth does a scissors kick or two while maintaining her come-hither brand of snootiness; minimalism prevails. If Chicago in the twenties was like this, it was more fun than Periclean Athens. Also starring Karen Ziemba, Hinton Battle, and Ernie Sabella. (Simon:

Opening

Toto, Catwoman. Catwoman, Toto.

At long last! As the Wicked Witch of the West in this year's MSG revival of 'The Wizard of Oz,' Eartha Kitt has finally found herself a stage role that (a) makes the most of her campy, vampy talents and (b) reaches a more appreciative audience than reluctant taxicab passengers. Have a purrrrrrrfect evening. Rrrrreeeow! (Performances begin May 1 at the Theater at Madison Square Garden.)

Photograph by Gerry Goodstein.



"WHAT A SWELL PARTY THIS IS!"
– NEW YORK MAGAZINE

Melissa Errico Daniel McDonald
Randy Graff Stephen Bogardus and John McMartin
in

High Society

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12/2/96.) $20–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 11/14/96. *Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

The Deep Blue Sea—He, sadly, is best known these days as the smirking pitchman for Dodge minivans, and she as Gwyneth Paltrow's mother. But with any luck, Edward Herrmann and Blythe Danner will reestablish themselves as sovereigns of the New York stage in this 1952 Terence Rattigan drama about a woman who leaves a dependable husband for an undependable lover. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Through 5/17. *Roundabout Theatre Company Stage Right, 1530 Broadway, at 45th St. (719-1300).*

The Diary of Anne Frank—Natalie Portman, the electrifying teen cutie from *Beautiful Girls,* stars in this newly adapted version of the 1955 play. Also starring Linda Lavin, Harris Yulin, George Hearn, and Austin Pendleton. $40–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 12/4/97. *Music Box Theater, 239 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Freak—John Leguizamo has proved, in various mediums and genres, that he is versatile, witty, inventive, and charming. He writes and delivers funny dialogue within his monologues, interrupts his acting to execute nimble dance steps both elegant and satirical, and creates characters with facial expressions, vocal mannerisms, and body language that blend into a riotous lingua franca. He brings these skills to his Broadway show, which purports to be semi-autobiographical and is surely, in Anatole France's great phrase, a story truer than truth. (Simon: 3/2/98.) $17.50–$55. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Through 7/4. *Cort Theatre, 138 W. 48th St. (239-6200).*

Golden Child—After returning to his Chinese hamlet from a business trip, Eng Tieng-Bin, the protagonist of this new memory play, proudly presents his three wives with a new waffle iron, a cuckoo clock, and a phonograph. But his less tangible acquisitions—a new faith, a changed outlook on education, and an overpowering desire to unbind his daughter's feet—do not blend so seamlessly into his traditional home. Directed by James Lapine; written by David Henry Hwang, author of *M. Butterfly.* $30–$50. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. *Longacre Theatre, 220 W. 48th St. (239-6200).*

The Herbal Bed—Peter Whelan's drama about lurid accusations of adultery—leveled against Shakespeare's eldest daughter. Directed by Michael Attenborough; presented by the Royal Shakespeare Company. $20–$50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 4/16/98. *Eugene O'Neill Theater, 230 W. 49th St. (239-6200).*

High Society—What a swell party this is! Music and lyrics by Cole Porter (with an assist from Susan Birkenhead); book by Arthur Kopit. Based on Philip Barry's *The Philadelphia Story,* drolly immortalized onscreen by Katharine Hepburn, Jimmy Stewart, and Cary Grant. $25–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *St. James Theatre, 246 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

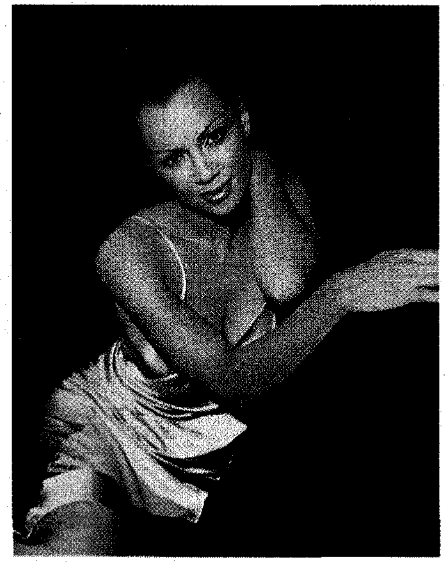
Honour—As the former chairwoman of the National Endowment for the Arts, Jane Alexander must have had her share of unpleasant media moments. But at no time, one suspects, did any journalist treat her as disrespectfully as the fictional one in this drama starring Robert Foxworth, Laura Linney, and the former Clinton appointee. Here, the bottom-feeding scribe shows up at Alexander's house to do a profile of her husband—and winds up having an affair with him instead. Written by Joanna Murray-Smith; directed by Gerald Gutierrez. $25–$50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 4/26/98. *Belasco Theatre, 111 W. 44 St. (239-6200).*

Jekyll & Hyde—Man turns into beastly man, all in the name of science. Book and lyrics by Leslie Bricusse, music by Frank Wildhorn. $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8; Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 4/28/97. *Plymouth Theatre, 236 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

The Last Night of Ballyhoo—This romantic comedy, set in 1939 Atlanta on the eve of the premiere of *Gone With the Wind,* is Alfred Uhry's first effort since *Driving Miss Daisy.* The wait clearly paid off; he won the 1997 Tony award for Best Play. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 2/27/97. *Helen Hayes Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Opening
Return of the Spider Woman

The irresistible Encores! series concludes its 1998 season with 'St. Louis Woman,' the Johnny Mercer musical about a saloon dame who falls for a jockey with an improbable winning streak. Vanessa Williams stars—come rain or come shine!—in the role originally written for Lena Horne; Jack O'Brien directs. Performances run April 30 through May 3 at City Center.



Les Misérables—The implacable Inspector Javert hounding the innocent ex-convict Jean Valjean; the pathetic Fantine, wronged by the entire world, dying as she entrusts her daughter, Cosette, to the now-prosperous Mayor Valjean; the dastardly Thénardiers bringing up Cosette as a scullion while cosseting their own daughter, Eponine—what a story! Just synopsizing the plot brings tears to the iciest eyes. (Simon: 3/31/97.) $15–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/12/87. *Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (239-6200). 3 hrs. 15 mins.*

The Life—A contemporary street opera set in eighties Times Square. Lillias White and Chuck Cooper just picked up Tony awards for their performances. Music and lyrics by Cy Coleman and Ira Gasman; book by Coleman, Gasman, and David Newman. $40–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened 4/26/97. *Ethel Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St. (239-6200).*

The Lion King—This spectacle rightfully earns that most abused of epithets: *magical.* Kiddies will delightedly swallow it whole, unless they are tiny and flappable. But this is the one such show adults will feast on, too, mostly because of the wonders wrought by Julie Taymor, who designed and directed this cornucopia of dazzlements. Puppetry from East and West is put to superlative use, yet the actors, singers, and dancers are accorded enough humanity to ply their anthropomorphic skills. And Taymor has found ways to transmute the strictly cartoonish bravura of the big-screen Lion King onto a stage so that nothing is lost in translation. (Simon: 12/1/97). $20–$75. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. *New Amsterdam Theater, 214 W. 42nd St. (307-4100).*

Miss Saigon—This reworking of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly,* set in Vietnam during the fall of Saigon, is now one of Broadway's ten longest-running musicals. Music by Claude-Michel Schonberg; lyrics by Alain Boublil and Richard Maltby Jr.; directed by Nicholas Hytner. $15–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/11/91. *Broadway Theater, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. (239-6200).*

The Old Neighborhood—Three interconnected one-act plays by David Mamet, starring Peter Riegert, Patti LuPone, Vincent Guastaferro, Mary McCann, and Jack Willis. Directed by Scott Zigler. $45–$55. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. *Booth Theatre, 222 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

The Phantom of the Opera—Nine leads, ten years, $357 million, and almost 7 million theatergoers later, Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster continues to pack them in. $15–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. *Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Ragtime—A musical based on E. L. Doctorow's historical novel, with a book by Terrence McNally and music by the composer-lyricist team of Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens. The epic, neatly trimmed and tidied for the stage, braids the fates of three fictitious families—one black, one Jewish, one Wasp—and an assortment of historical characters. $31–$125. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 1/18/97. *Ford Center for the Performing Arts, 213 W. 42nd St. (307-4100).*

Rent—The late Jonathan Larson's reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as it might be lived by a gaggle of contemporary sick and hip types living in the East Village. $30–$67.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 45 mins.*

The Scarlet Pimpernel—You've seen the billboard. Now come see the show. Pop composer Frank Wildhorn (*Jekyll & Hyde*) did the score. Nan Knighton adapted Baroness Orczy's novel for the stage. Christine Andreas, Terrence Mann, and Douglas Sills star. $20–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 11/9/97. *Minskoff Theatre, 200 W. 45th St. (307-4100).*

1776—The book of this 1969 musical, the gifted Peter Stone's masterpiece, is surely one of the best ever. Thrillingly incorporating the potentially divisive issue of slavery, it succeeds in keeping us, despite our knowledge of the outcome, in a state of wonderfully paradoxical suspense. Splendid as was Peter Hunt's original production, this Scott Ellis revival very nearly matches it. It will provide you not only with three hours of choice theatergoing but also with three very rich hours of life. Music and lyrics by Sherman Edwards. (Simon: 8/25/97.) $20–$75. Wed.–Sat. at 8; Wed. and Sat. at 2; Sun. at 1 and 6:30. *Gershwin Theatre, 222 W. 51st St. (307-4100).*

Smokey Joe's Cafe: The Songs of Leiber and Stoller—They say the neon lights are bright on Broadway, and when this show—drawn from the songbook Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller wrote to accompany the American baby-boomer childhood experience—breezes into New York City, people gonna scrape and bow. A tip, tip, tip, young blood: Buy yourself a ticket, sit down in the very first row. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. $65–$75. *At the Virginia Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. (239-6200)?* Uh-huh. *2 hrs. 10 mins.*

The Sound of Music—Returns to Broadway for the first time since its 1959 premiere. Hum along; bring the kids. Rebecca Luker, who played a memorable Magnolia in *Show Boat,* plays the nun turned governess, and Michael Siberry plays the widower captain. $50–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened 3/12/98. *Martin Beck Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

The Sunshine Boys—This Neil Simon play is a triumph of strategy. (1) It is full of one-liners: easily detachable and portable laughs. (2) The main characters, a retired vaudeville team, now hate each other, hence ever-popular insult comedy. (3) Willie Clark and Al Lewis are also Jewish, so we get audience-tickling Jewish jokes. (4) The background is show business,

Photograph by Sante D'Orazio.

providing cherished showbiz humor. Add the stage-screen-and-TV-enshrined duo of Jack Klugman (Willie) and Tony Randall (Al), and it's platinum-edged-securities time. This production at the National Actors Theatre revival is rattling good fun. (Simon: 1/5/98.) $30–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 12/8/97. *Lyceum Theatre, 149 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Titanic—What it lacks in suspense it makes up for in Tony awards (five, in 1997, including Best Musical). Music and lyrics by Maury Yeston; book by Peter Stone. Directed by Richard Jones. $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 4/23/97. *Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. (307-4100).*

A View From the Bridge—One of the most distressing tales Arthur Miller ever told. Anthony LaPaglia stars as Eddie Carbone, the longshoreman who lusts after his niece; Allison Janney plays his long-suffering wife. Michael Mayer directs. $30–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd St. (307-4100).*

Wait Until Dark—Even if a girl weren't blind, she'd find it pretty unnerving to be trapped in a house with Quentin Tarantino. Unfortunately, the new production of Frederick Knott's 1966 thriller requires that Marisa Tomei be both (blind and trapped, that is) and that Tarantino, as a psychotic drug dealer, torture her. Robert Duvall and Lee Remick starred in the original Broadway version; Leonard Foglia *(Master Class)* directs the revival. $45–$60. Tues.–Sat. 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 4/5/98. *Brooks Atkinson Theatre, 256 W. 47th St. (307-4100).*

Off Broadway

Previews and Openings

Aunt Chooch's Birthday—It was only a matter of time before the *Tony 'n' Tina* people came out with a sequel, and a birthday party seems as reasonable a premise as any. $65; dinner and dancing included. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2 and Sun. at 3. In previews for a 5/11 opening. *Vegas Room, 221 W. 46th St. (239-6200).*

Bob—A love letter from one avant-garde director, Anne Bogart, to another, Bob Wilson. Performed by Will Bond. $35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 5/5 opening. *New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. (460-5475).*

The Dying Gaul—Craig Lucas's new drama about the vulnerability and rotten judgment of a struggling young writer. Directed by Mark Brokaw, who has already proven his genius for this subject matter with *As Bees in Honey Drown.* $35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. In previews for a 5/12 opening. *Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. (353-3874).*

The Empty Beach—The Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre presents Jamie Salom's play about an older woman, her young lover, and a young lady whom they have both rescued. $20. English performances on Wed., Thurs., and Fri. at 8; Spanish performances on Sat. at 2 and 8 and Sun. at 2 and 6:30. Previews begin 4/29 for a 5/7 opening. *Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. (239-6200).*

The Fastest Clock in the Universe—This scabrous comedy by Philip Ridley, the capstone production of the New Group's fourth season, concerns Cougar, a 30-year-old with a pathological fear of growing old. Every year, he throws a 19th-birthday party for himself and invites someone younger and more beautiful to seduce—until this year, when all his plans go awry. $15. Mon.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 4 and 8. Previews begin 4/28 for a 5/7 opening. *Intar Theatre, 420 W. 42nd St. (279-4200).*

Mr. Peter's Connections—Peter Falk returns to the New York stage for the first time in 27 years to do this original Arthur Miller play, which the playwright completed this season as Signature Theatre's artist-in-residence. Garry Hynes, the force behind *The Beauty Queen of Leenane,* directs. $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 4/28 for a 5/17 opening. *Signature Theatre Company, 555 W. 42nd St. (244-PLAY).*

Power Plays—A series of three one-act comedies, starring and written by Alan Arkin and Elaine May. $47.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat. and Sun. at 2:30. In previews for a 5/7 opening. *Promenade Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (239-6200).*

Too Jewish Two—Avi Hoffman's sequel to *Too Jewish?* is a tribute to the tummlers, the precursors of the Borscht Belt comics and shtickers. Presented by Jewish Repertory Theatre. $35. Tues. and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7, Wed. at 2. In previews for a 4/28 opening. *Playhouse 91, 316 E. 91st St. (831-2000).*

Now Playing

Aloha Las Vegas—Edward Sakamoto's new comedy about the allure of Sin City. Presented by Pan Asian Rep. as the final installment of the multicultural *Three by 3* series. $30. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Through 5/16. *St. Clement's Theatre, 423 W. 46th St. (245-2660).*

As Bees in Honey Drown—Socialite Alexa Vere de Vere—one part Hepburn, two parts eyeliner, three parts luxury addict—enlists a young author to write a screenplay about her life. Written by Douglas Carter Beane; alertly directed by Mark Brokaw (*How I Learned to Drive*). Starring Bo Foxworth and Kristine Nielsen. $47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened 7/24/97. *Lucille Lortel Theatre, 121 Christopher St. (239-6200).*

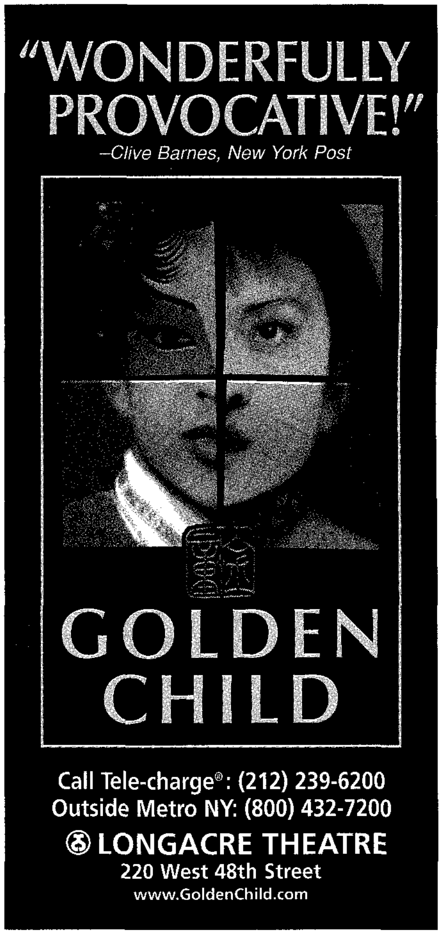
Bad Sex With Bud Kemp—Sandra Tsing Loh's new comedy about dating and other hazardous ventures. $32.50. Tues., Thurs., and Fri. at 8, Wed. at 7, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Second Stage Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (787-3392).*

Blue Man Group: Tubes—Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, etc. Wildly inventive, and appropriate for just about everyone—kids, adults, foreigners, haters and lovers of performance art. $39–$49. Tues., Wed., Thurs.

Opening
Call of the Wilde

Liam Neeson, an actor so powerfully built he looks like a Rodin figure who deserted his post, plays a sculpted, unexpectedly virile Oscar Wilde in David Hare's *The Judas Kiss,* opening April 29 at the Broadhurst Theatre. The play dramatizes two critical episodes in the writer's life: the collapse of his libel case against the Marquess of Queensbury (during which Wilde chose, rather mysteriously, not to flee the country, though he was given the option) and his post-prison exile in Naples, during which he eked out a miserable and reduced existence with Lord Alfred Douglas, the lover for whom he suffered. Directed by Richard Eyre, who until recently was the head of the Royal National Theatre.

Photograph by Ivan Kyncl.



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at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. *Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (254-4370).*

The Cripple of Inishmaan—An Irish orphan, Cripple Billy, dreams of landing a part in a Hollywood filmmaker's documentary in order to impress his beloved. The play is Martin McDonagh's first in his Aran Island trilogy and his second to open in New York this season. $40. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. Through 5/10. *The Public's Newman Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (239-6200).*

Eddie Izzard: Dress to Kill—Britain's hottest, cross-dressingest comic offers his views on dinosaurs, the space program, and being raised by wolves. $35–$40. Tues.–Sat. at 8:30. Through 6/6. *Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. (307-7171).*

Fantasticks—The musical perennial that, happily, refuses to go away. $35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 7, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 5/3/60. *Sullivan St. Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (674-3838).*

A Flea in Her Ear—Bill Irwin, who proved himself a first-class interpreter of French farce in the Roundabout production of *Scapin* two years ago, now brings his directorial energies to bear on this 1907 Feydeau comedy about the misadventures of a suspicious wife. Mark Linn-Baker, last seen on his way to the forum, stars. $50. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. *Roundabout's Laura Pels Theatre, 1530 Broadway, at 45th St. (719-1300).*

Forbidden Broadway Strikes Back!—Some titles say it all, and Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof poking fun at the assorted absurdities of the Great White Way couldn't arrive in town at a more—well, let's be kind and say propitious time. $40–$45. Mon., Wed.–Fri. at 8:15, Sat. at 2:30 and 8:15, Sun. at 3:30 and 7:30; food and drink available/optional. *Stardust Theatre, Broadway at 51st St. (239-6200).*

From Above—Tom Donaghy combines the conceit of *Martin Guerre* with the meandering small-town sensibility of *Northern Exposure* for his new drama set in the Catskills. Patricia Kalember stars as a widowed waitress at a has-been's resort; Neal Huff plays the fellow who shows up one day at her door, claiming to be her dead husband. $37.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. (279-4200).*

Grandma Sylvia's Funeral—An audience-participation comedy akin to *Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding,* written by Glenn Wein and Amy Lord Blumsack. When Grandma Sylvia dies, a power struggle ensues among family members. $37.50–$57.50, which includes a mitzvah meal. Opened: 10/9/94. Wed. at 2 and 7:30, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9, Sun. at 1 and 5. *Soho Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (691-1555).*

Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde—From letters, biographies, and court transcripts, writer-director Moisés Kaufman has put together an absorbing show about Oscar Wilde's 1895 trial for "gross indecency with male persons." $20–$47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, and Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened 6/5/97. *Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane (307-4100).*

Hedwig and the Angry Inch—John Cameron Mitchell—actor, director, and founding member of the Drama Dept.—wrote and stars in this rock concert–cum–musical, in which a German war bride finds herself in a Kansas trailer park and achieves self-actualization, not to mention tabloid fame, through songwriting. Featuring Stephen Trask and his downtown band, Cheater. $40. Mon. and Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. Opened 2/14/98. *Jane Street Theatre at the Hotel Riverview Ballroom, 113 Jane St. (239-6200).*

Howard Crabtree's When Pigs Fly—An irrepressible, technicolor celebration of puns, fabric, and gay life. Its costumer and musical "conceiver," Howard Crabtree, died in June of 1996, just days after completing the revue. $45. Mon. and Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 5. *Douglas Fairbanks Theater, 432 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change—They're here. They're straight. Get used to it. It's a daring innovation, perhaps, but this musical revue about what, in the context of most contemporary musicals, seems an amusingly quaint subject these days—heterosexual love—has bravely decided to buck the trend. $47.50–$50. Mon. and Tues at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Fri at 8, Sat. at 2:30 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (239-6200).*

I Will Come Back—A new musical celebrating Judy Garland's life. Written and directed by Timothy Gray, an associate of the diva; starring Tommy Femia, a cabaret performer who's made a healthy living out of impersonating her. $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Players Theatre, 115 MacDougal St. (239-6200).*

Jails, Hospitals, & Hip-Hop—Danny Hoch, the *bandittel* from Queens, plays twelve urban misfits, then spews buckets of vitriol at Jerry Seinfeld. $10–$25. Wed. and Thurs. at 8:30, Fri. and Sat. at 8:30 and 11. *P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. (477-5288).*

Jim Beckwourth—Harrison Lee stars in this one-man show about a black pioneer who helped open the American West. Written by Mark Weston. $15–$30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2, Sat. 2 and 5, Sun. at 1, 3:30, and 7. Through 5/2. *Producer's Club Theatre II, 616 Ninth Ave. (718-983-1990).*

Joseph Gabriel Magic—Magician Joseph Gabriel mixes sleights of hand with large-scale illusions. $25–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Lamb's Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Late Nite Catechism—Maripat Donovan as a parochial-school-teaching nun backed by a magisterium of unassailable moral authority and some mean wrist action with a ruler. $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 5. *St. Luke's Church Annex, 308 W. 46th St. (239-6200).*

Long Day's Journey Into Night—This is an immense play, the towering achievement of American drama, which grows, incredibly, with each successive viewing. It brings out the best awareness we can muster even in this production, scaled down to a tiny stage that cannot convey a rambling cottage crisscrossed by living ghosts. None of the actors is quite right for the job. Yet they all gradually grow into their parts and, overleaping their lacks, etch themselves into our consciousness. Even cut and somewhat defanged, O'Neill's masterwork epitomizes both the human comedy and the tragic sense of life. (Simon: 4/6/98.) $30–$35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (727-2737).*

Festival

Waiting for Fifty

While the Actors Studio may be best known these days for its interview series on Bravo—and, by extension, its peacockish host, James Lipton—it once was home to first-magnitude Hollywood stars like Marilyn Monroe, Marlon Brando, and Paul Newman. Beginning April 27, some more-recent graduates of the celebrated acting school (Delroy Lindo, Marisa Tomei) as well as some of its older alumni (Rip Torn, Shelley Winters, Eli Wallach, Anne Jackson) will take turns reading aloud from plays by Clifford Odets and other influential playwrights of the thirties. All performances of the three-week 50th Anniversary Festival are free. For details and more information, call 757-2467.

Roman Bohmen and Frances Farmer in 'Golden Boy.'

Mindgames—Marc Salem, a mentalist and former director of research for *Sesame Street,* does a slew of fancy math tricks, stops his own pulse, and predicts the contents of people's wallets. $40. Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2, 7, and 10, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (239-6200).*

Miss Julie—Strindberg's classic about the romance between a highborn woman and low-stationed man. $24–$30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Through 5/17. *Pearl Theatre Company, 80 St. Marks Pl. (598-9802).*

Never the Sinner—The sensational story of Leopold and Loeb—two wealthy, well-educated teenagers who in 1924 murdered a young boy on a whim—moves from the American Jewish Theatre, where it played to great acclaim earlier this season, to a home farther uptown. $25–$45. Mon. and Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2:30 and 8, Sun. at 3. *John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

Peep Show—The latest installment in the Ronnie Larsen chronicles of New York sleaze. $30–$40. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened 3/31/98. *Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. South, at Sheridan Sq. (239-6200).*

Perfect Crime—Warren Manzi's long-running thriller about a wealthy psychiatrist accused of murdering her husband, and the small-town detective who tries to prove she committed the "perfect crime." $35. Mon. and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/5/87. *Duffy Theatre, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. (695-3401).*

Quidam—Cirque Du Soleil's ninth spectacular—which should, like its previous eight, chill, tickle, and trompe many an oeil. $15.75–$59.50. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. at 6 and 9:30, Sat. at 4:30 and 8:30, Sun. at 1 and 5. *Big Top at Battery Park City. (1-800-678-5440).*

R & J—A four-man, prop-free version of *Romeo and Juliet* that will likely stand out among the tragedy's many newfangled interpretations. $40. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. *John Houseman Studio Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

Secrets Every Smart Traveler Should Know—There is a decent amount of merriment to be had from this revue. Inspired—or incited—by a homonymous travel guide, this show by a number of hands pokes fun at every aspect of travel, from the hopeless phone calls for airline reservations to the joys of sandy Uzbekistan. Nothing is overlooked, though some things are a mite undercooked. Even the Ca*th*tilian li*th*p ge*th* a tuneful *th*ong tribute. (Simon: 12/15/97.) $42.50–$47.50; optional dinner one hour before curtain. Mon., Wed., Thurs., and Fri. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Triad Theatre, 158 W. 72nd St. (799-4599).*

Stomp—As the title implies, a loud, aggressive, and energetic show in which a troupe of performers dances, claps, and generally bangs on everything in sight. Featuring buckets, brooms, trash-can lids, and, yes, the kitchen sink. $24.50–$49.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 2/27/94. *Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., bet. 7th and 8th Sts. (477-2477).*

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding—A wedding at *St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St.*, then a reception at *Vinnie's, 147 Waverly Pl.*, with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. Wonderfully tacky—and it's lasted longer than a lot of real marriages. $65–$75. Tues.–Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 2. Opened: 2/6/88. *(239-6200).*

Two Pianos, Four Hands—Ted Dykstra and Richard Greenblatt, a pair of talented pianists who never made it to the recital halls, wax philosophical about pushy parents, arrogant students, and smug concert judges. $25–$45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 6. Opened 10/30/97. *Variety Arts Theatre, 110 Third Ave., at 14th St. (239-6200).*

Visiting Mr. Green—Eli Wallach, who made his Broadway debut more than a half-century ago, stars in this new comedy about a relationship between a young man and an older Jewish widower. $35–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. *Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. (505-0700).*

Photograph from Photofest.

restaurants

Italian Import...Dough Boys...Rao's Read

Manhattan

Lower New York

Alison on Dominick—An impeccably turned-out room with blue banquettes and tender lighting. Perfectionist owner Alison Becker Hurt makes sure that all is well. *38 Dominick St., nr. Hudson St. (727-1188). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Bo Ky—This very basic Chinatown spot has been dishing up delicious noodle soups to the neighborhood since before the Mees and Tang Tangs sprouted uptown. Expect to share a table. *80 Bayard St. (406-2292). (I) ($).*

Canal House—The restaurant at the SoHo Grand Hotel, a beige-on-beige dining room with *Alice in Wonderland* fixtures and furniture, turns out surprisingly tasty regional American fare. Try the macaroni and cheese, the crab cakes, and the cornmeal-crusted chicken breast, or—if you're the type who likes to loiter in hotels—nurse a cocktail in the lounge. *310 West Broadway (965-3588). (M–E) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Chanterelle—Spare and elegant, virtually religious, this TriBeCa restaurant is a favorite among those who want a Big Deal. Chef David Waltuck runs a grand kitchen—seafood sausage, cold fruit soups, and anything he does with truffles in season. Wife Karen runs the front room with class and warmth. *2 Harrison St., at Hudson St. (966-6960). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Kelley and Ping—The type of funky, lofty noodle house that could only exist—and thrive—in SoHo. *127 Greene St., nr. Prince St. (228-1212). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Layla—A Middle Eastern feast, complete with gyrating belly dancer, brought to you by Drew Nieporent and his TriBeCa production team. Menu highlights include crabmeat phyllo, cinnamon-braised lamb shank with okra, and toasted couscous and almond ice milk. *211 W. Broadway, at Franklin St. (431-0700). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Il Mattone—In a neighborhood populated by pricey destination restaurants, this affordable Italian place is a great, dependable alternative. Try the brick-oven pizza or house specialties like penne alla vodka, pollo Sorrentino, seafood scampi, and vitello saltimbocca. *413 Greenwich St. (343-0030). (I) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Montrachet—Owner Drew Nieporent now has five places in New York, including Nobu, Layla, Zeppole at the TriBakery, and Tribeca Grill, and another in San Francisco. But this is his baby—attractive, lively, and one of the first truly great restaurants in lower Manhattan. There's lunch on Fridays—try the Roquefort-and-pear salad—and dinner Monday through Saturday. *239 W. Broadway, nr. White St. (219-2777). (E) AE only.*

Morton's of Chicago—The second New York location of the national steakhouse chain. Portions are huge, quality is consistent, and, in case you haven't noticed, beef is back. *90 West St. (732-5665). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Nobu—The great Nobu Matsuhisa—actually, he's young, good-looking, and incredibly hip—has arrived in TriBeCa. And New Yorkers haven't tasted Japanese cooking like this—unless, of course, they've visited Matsuhisa's restaurant in L.A. *105 Hudson St. (219-0500). (E) AE, MC, V.*

The Odeon—Downtown has fallen in love all over again with this TriBeCa institution. The bar's out of Dashiell Hammett, and the dining room gets everyone from the banker, his wife, and their 2-year-old to movie stars, artists, and assorted big-deal celebrities. *145 W. Broadway, nr. Thomas St. (233-0507). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *109 Spring St. (274-8883). Also, 240 Columbus Ave., at 71st St. (769-3988). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Pierino—An Italian dining room full of businesspeople and city politicians for lunch and dinner for the bankers on their way uptown offering meta-traditional dishes like lobster and steak. Yes, that was Peter Vallone. *107 Reade St. (513-0610). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Provence—Lots of people have got engaged in the charming garden at this authentic country French restaurant; even more have sampled the bourride, bouillabaisse, and bass flambé. If you can't actually make it to the Côte d'Azur, this is the next best thing. *38 MacDougal St. (475-7500). (M–E) AE.*

Raoul's—The dull roar in this cavelike bistro—aging gracefully amid the high-strung Thoroughbreds of SoHo's restaurant racetrack—is a heartwarming sound. *180 Prince St., nr. Thompson St. (966-3518). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Salaam Bombay—A far cry from the curry canteens of 6th Street, this Indian restaurant is a good alternative to TriBeCa's medley of French and Italian standbys. Marble floors and a canopy above each table decorate the dining room. Regional specialties from all corners of the country include dahi batata poori from Bombay, khaman dhokla from Gujarat, and lamb pasanda from Kashmir. *317 Greenwich St. (226-9400). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Taliesin—This power dining room inside the Millenium Hilton attracts its fair share of bankers and brokers with creative New American cuisine. Sample the chef's Italian-influenced fare by ordering an appetizer degustation menu or the three-course Tuscan Tastings prix fixe for $45.00. Open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. *55 Church St. (312-2000). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Tennessee Mountain—This 1807 landmark farmhouse serves up huge portions of smoked chicken and grilled ribs, plus regional appetizers and desserts. Bring those breath mints and Handi-Wipes for a $17.95 all-you-can-eat on Monday night. *143 Spring St. (431-3993). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Tribeca Grill—Though this spacious, brick-walled restaurant sometimes serves as canteen for the film execs (and movie stars) in offices upstairs, the creative American cuisine and lively bar scene make it a popular downtown destination. Known for its roasted meats and fish specials. *375 Greenwich St., at Franklin St. (941-3900). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Windows on the World—Chef Michael Lomonaco, formerly of the '21' Club, has landed at this landmark restaurant known for what may be the most spectacular view of Manhattan Island. His new menu focuses on sophisticated renditions of American food, including skillet-roasted bluepoint oysters with sweet shallot-caviar cream; open raviolo of forest mushrooms, pumpkin, and sage; and Maine lobster with truffles, root vegetables, and buttermilk biscuits. Be sure to take advantage of the restaurant's superlative wine cellar. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (524-7000). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

South Street Seaport

Harbor Lights—Comfort food in elegant French-ish environs with a breathtaking view of three bridges. *Pier 17, third floor (227-2800). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

North Star Pub—Stocked like a London pub, frequented by Wall Streeters and homesick tourists.

ASK GAEL

I want really good food alfresco.

Watch the Staten Island Ferry lumber past Ms. Liberty from American Park on the waterfront inside Battery Park. Behind glass walls or outside on the flowery terrace (El Niño permitting), we feel miles away from midtown clamor and auto exhaust as we dip into the flashy and flavorous cooking of Rad Matmati (Oceana and Tropica). What a pleasure to discover his grilled baby octopus with Israeli couscous and olives, a savory fish soup with orzo, the intense mushroom sauce of pan-roasted chicken, and his peppery braised short ribs on saffron risotto—all of it complex but not overwrought, entrées $19 to $26. Linger over warm citrus gratin. Dinner service starts May 1. And soon budgeteers will have their own less expensive waterside bar and grill. (Off State Street at South Ferry Plaza, inside Historic Battery Park; 809-5508.)

Photograph by Steven Freeman.

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Below 14th Street, East

Asti—This 70-year-old Village mainstay epitomizes the concept of the singing waiter. Professional opera singers perform arias and show tunes while waiters manage to carry a tune *and* serve orders of seafood fra diavolo, Maine lobsters, and Black Angus steak. Late-night dining too. *13 E. 12th St. (741-9105). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Gotham Bar & Grill—Alfred Portale's kitchen, with its architectural ingenuity and whimsical creativity, serves as a finishing school for the city's all-star chefs before they launch their own careers. This awesome dining temple has long been a staple. *12 E. 12th St. (620-4020). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Haveli—Haveli distinguishes itself from the Sixth Street strip, for its food as much as its upscale decor. Possibly the only East Village restaurant with an *intentionally* shattered windowpane. *100 Second Ave., nr. 6th St. (982-0533). (I–M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Miracle Grill—One of the earliest pioneers on the East Village dining scene, this comfortable Mexican cantina is especially welcoming in warm weather, when the garden is a serene urban oasis. The grilled-vegetable plate surpasses most. *112 First Ave., nr. 7th St. (254-2353). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Osso Buco—Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. *88 University Pl., nr. 11th St. (645-4525). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Three of Cups—Proving that the East Village has room enough for another wood-burning oven pizza parlor besides Two Boots. The "mickey," a charred spud dripping with butter, shouldn't be missed. *83 First Ave., at 5th St. (388-0059). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Below 14th Street, West

Andalousia—This relatively undiscovered Village Moroccan rightly prides itself on its roster of tagines and couscous specials. B'stilla is a standout. *28 Cornelia St. (929-3693). (I) MC, V.*

Bar Pitti—This Tuscan trattoria, with tables spilling out onto the sidewalk, has simpler, cheaper food than Da Silvano next door, but it's just as good a spot to sip an espresso and watch the Village foot traffic. Great fettunta. *268 Sixth Ave., nr. Bleecker St. (982-3300). (I–M) ($).*

Blue Note Jazz Club and Restaurant—Should you develop an appetite while listening to some of the world's best jazz acts, this famous Village club offers a full menu, with such Continental fare as shrimp with scallops and salmon with champagne sauce. Open for brunch, too. *131 W. 3rd St. (475-8592). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Boxers—A lively neighborhood American bistro on a heavily trafficked corner of Sheridan Square. The giddy bar scene brings them in, and the high-spirited frenzy and good food keep them coming back. (A newer uptown branch offers a similar menu of American classics like chicken potpie and grilled steaks and burgers, and is decorated with a similar canine motif.) *190 W. 4th St. (633-2275). Also, 1152 First Ave., at 63rd St. (688-9663). (I) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Da Silvano—Trattoria with tables out front converts this thoroughfare into a people promenade. Great food and views of the local color. Yes, that was Anna Wintour. *260 Sixth Ave., nr. Bleecker St. (982-2343). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Greenwich Cafe—This Village café, with its plush antique wing chairs and rococo mirrors, has a loungy feel and is open around the clock with a menu that crosses every border. Representative items include crab cakes with lobster sauce and fennel tempura, grilled salmon with jasmine rice, and a veggie burger with minted couscous. No cover for the jazz brunch. *75 Greenwich Ave. (255-5489). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Le Zoo—The newest West Village scene, with lots of Left Bank ambience. The menu sticks to standards like poulet grand mère, saumon en croute, and cassolette. *314 W. 11th St. (620-0393). (M) AE, MC, V.*

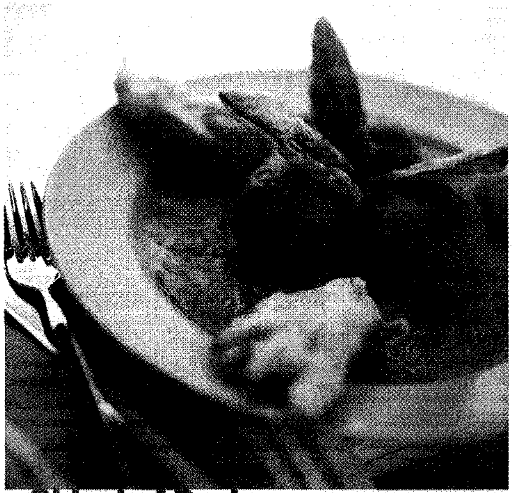
One if by Land, Two if by Sea—Elegant Village restaurant situated within an eighteenth-century carriage house previously owned by Aaron Burr. Four fireplaces and nightly piano music enhance a fine menu of American specialties like beef Wellington. *17 Barrow St. (228-0822). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Salam Cafe and Restaurant—This casual Arabic restaurant ensconced in a Village brownstone offers a broad variety of Middle Eastern food, including kebabs, couscous, and lamb with yogurt-and-sesame sauce, plus lots of vegetarian options. Try the Lebanese wine. *104 W. 13th St. (741-0277). (I–M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

Alva—Bare lightbulbs evoke Thomas Edison, the namesake of this sleek spot invented by Charles Palmer and designer Fernando Saralegui, but the food is all very twentieth-century: crispy shrimp cocktail, cod-and-salmon cakes, veal stew, an exciting cheese course. *36 E. 22nd St. (228-4399). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

An American Place—This venerable midtown spot is to New York as Chez Panisse is to Berkeley. With his eclectic American



Object of Desire
The New White Meatball

In the interest of regional verisimilitude, Pino Luongo has installed Florentine Patrick Nuti as head chef at his Tuscan Square emporium. Nuti, formerly chef of Florence's renowned Il Cibreo, brings with him the recipe for uncommonly moist chicken-and-ricotta polpette, or meatballs, flavored with Parmesan, sage, and rosemary and served with fried and sautéed zucchini. (16 West 51st Street; 977-7777.)

Photograph by Amy Freeth.

Ground Rules:

Here lie a few hundred of the city's more noteworthy restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive, $35 and over per place; (M) = moderate, $15–$30 per place; (I) = inexpensive, $15 and under per place. Following each listing there is also a code indicating acceptable methods of payment: ($) = cash only, AE = American Express, CB = Carte Blanche, DC = Diners Club, DS = Discover, M = MasterCard, TM = Transmedia, V = Visa. "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted charge/credit card.

menu, Larry Forgione made the national cuisine interesting again. *2 Park Ave., at 32nd St. (684-2122). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Back Porch—Ideal spot for Murray Hill residents to meet for drinks alfresco and southwestern-flavored fare. Sit outdoors as long as the weather holds. *488 Third Ave., at 33rd St. (685-3828). (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Bolo—There's nothing discreet about Bobby Flay's neo-Spanish cooking. In a room that reminds you of Gaudí by way of Pee-wee Herman, Flay turns out fiery, bold dishes like oven-roasted mushrooms with goat cheese and chili oil as well as paella with curried shellfish and chicken. We *love* the white-peach sangría. *23 E. 22nd St. (228-2200). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Brew's—As casual and comfortable as a burger joint gets. This two-story landmark always pleases. Great beer selection, and the always hospitable longtime owners, the Brew family, make this an oasis in the desert above 14th Street. A new attraction is a weekend brunch accompanied by live Irish music, and fifteen versions of that most archetypical brunch drink, the Bloody Mary. *156 E. 34th St. (889-3369). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Campagna—The *Letterman* crowd is at one table, Time Warner honchos are at another, and isn't that . . . ? Despite the frenzy of having become Media Central, this smart little trattoria serves some of the most satisfying Italian food in Manhattan. Chef Mark Straussman is to thank for dishes like rabbit in polenta, gnocchi with wild mushrooms and truffle oil, and grilled tuna with beets. *24 E. 21st St. (460-0900). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

El Parador Cafe—Very possibly the oldest Mexican restaurant in New York City, this comfortable, dependable establishment is known for its enormous selection of premium tequilas and traditional dishes like mole poblano, carnitas, and duck with cuipotle glaze. *325 E. 34th St. (679-6812). (M) MC, V.*

Gramercy Tavern—As a second act to Danny Meyer's much-loved Union Square Cafe, this Flatiron American standout doesn't disappoint. The main dining room manages to be both impressive and cozy, the service superlative, and Tom Colicchio's food inspired. For lesser appetites and lower budgets, the bar menu in the Tavern Room is equally delicious. Orchestrate your own cheese course and sample the varied selection of wines by the glass. *42 E. 20th St. (477-0777). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Heartland Brewery—A rollicking brewpub with a lively outdoor café and a menu as American as its Thomas Hart Benton–ish murals. Accompany your choice of microbrew with comfort food like meat loaf with buttermilk smashed potatoes, stout-glazed chicken with apricots and juniper berries, and—for adventurers—buffalo burgers. The beer-weary can sample from the city's largest selection of tequilas and single-malt scotches. *35 Union Square W. (645-3400). (I) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

i Trulli—A Southern Italian restaurant that aims to prove that tomato sauce is not crucial for survival, i Trulli succeeds with tasty focaccia, homemade sausage, tripe, and venison. In warm weather, the garden is a perfect midtown escape. *122 E. 27th St. (481-7372). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Les Halles—Even though it hasn't been around forever, this utterly perfect re-creation of a Left Bank

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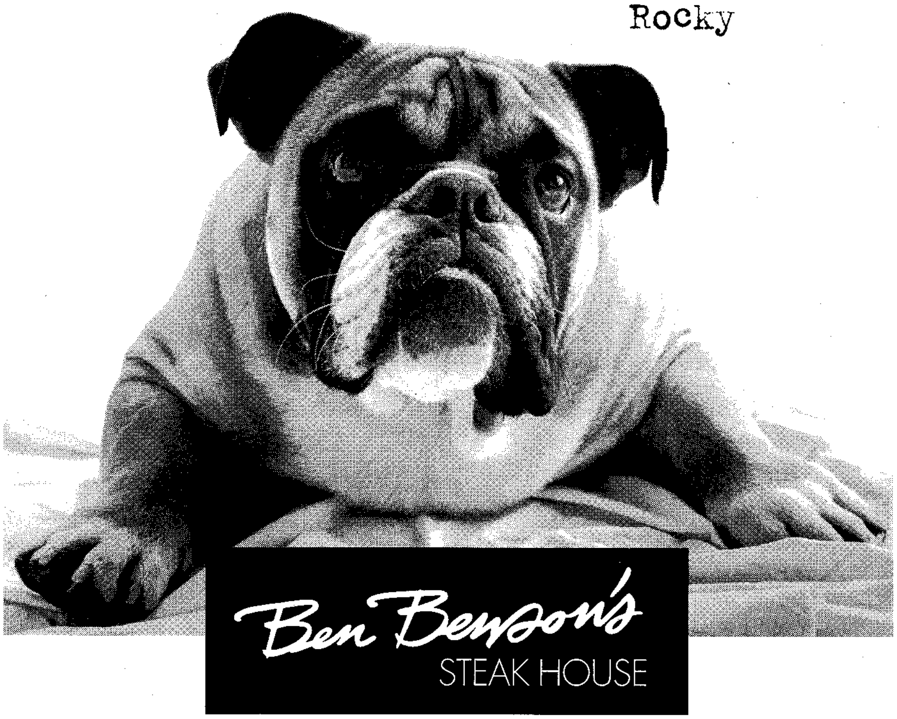

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bistro seems like it has. This is the place to come for onion soup, steak-frites, celeri rémoulade, crème caramel—that sort of thing. *411 Park Ave. So., bet. 28th and 29th Sts. (679-4111). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Mendy's —This kosher midtown deli proudly claims to be New York's only Jewish sports bar and serves hearty American fare like soups, salads, steaks, and chops. *61 E. 34th St. (576-1010). Also, 208 W. 70th St. (877-6787). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Mesa Grill—Chef Bobby Flay believes in big flavors and big portions. He developed his own signature style, plundering the ingredients of the American Southwest for such mouthwatering creations as roasted-garlic shrimp tamales and ancho-honey-glazed salmon. Loud, stylish, and loads of fun, especially for those partaking of the house drink, a cactus-pear margarita. *102 Fifth Ave., nr. 16th St. (807-7400). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Novitá—A beautiful new Flatiron restaurant with upscale, nouvelle Italian. Try, especially, the handmade pastas, which seem to have only beneficial effects on all the fashion types and Elite models who've made this room their home away from home. *102 E. 22nd St. (677-2222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Oyster Bar—When a fire temporarily shuttered this Manhattan landmark, its long-faithful clientele were bereft, unsure of what to do with themselves at lunchtime. The doors have reopened, the vaulted ceilings have been (for the most part) repaired, and the regulars are taking their places at the counter. Famous for its 25 varieties of oysters, extensive wine selection, and comprehensive seafood preparations, the restaurant is a magnet for commuters and tourists alike. *Grand Central Terminal, 42nd St. and Vanderbilt Ave. (490-6650). (M) AE, CB, DS, MC, V.*

Park Bistro—Provençal offerings prepared and served with notable agility in an intimate—sometimes crowded—setting. *414 Park Ave. at 28th St. (689-1360). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Patria—Zesty Latin American fare brought to you in a festive high-energy atmosphere. The three-story dining room suits the changing mood of diners: bright and airy by day and warm and earthy by night. Chef Doug Rodriguez comes from Miami via a childhood in New York. Really. Try the Mojito, Patria's signature drink made from sugarcane. *250 Park Ave. So., nr. 20th St. (777-6211). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Union Square Cafe—The careful service, human-scale dining rooms, and peerless California café cuisine make this one of the best restaurants in the city. *21 E. 16th St. (243-4020). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

Bright Food Shop—A Chelsea luncheonette with an innovative, healthy Mexican menu with Asian influences. Excellent desserts and a great selection of Mexican fruit sodas. *216 Eighth Ave., at 21st St. (243-4433). (I–M) ($).*

Bryant Park Grill—This long-awaited restaurant on the edge of the city's prettiest pocket park has been mobbed from day one. Go at an off-hour for Caesar salad, New York steak, soft-shell crabs, and scallion pancakes. *40th St., between Fifth and Sixth Aves. (840-6500). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Da Umberto—Low-key Chelsea façade belies the extraordinary Italian offerings inside. Getting a table is no small task, especially in the evening. This is a Euro–New York crossroads. A mad cacophony of laughter and chatter in Brooklynese and Roman. Don't dress down. *107 W. 17th St. (989-0303). (E) AE only.*

World Yacht—Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—over dinner. The luxury yacht boards at six, and sails from seven until ten. *Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (630-8100). (E) AE, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

Bice—It's always buzzing at this midtown Italian hot spot, where the fashionable crowd takes a hiatus from air-kissing to partake of dishes like lobster salad with baby vegetables, porcini risotto, and veal chop Milanese. *7 E. 54th St. (688-1999). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Café Centro—A big, shiny brasserie-cum-café in the lobby of the MetLife Building; there's inventive cooking going on here, and the joint is as fun and good as non-expensive midtown gets. In the loud little Beer Bar, get one of the best hamburgers in town. Closed Sunday. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (818-1222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Cucina & Co.—This market-style takeout shop and café is ideally situated in the lobby of the MetLife Building to catch the crush of commuters passing through Grand Central. Breakfast pastries, specialty sandwiches, baked pastas, steak-frites, and "Dinners for Two" keep the worker bees fueled throughout the day. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (682-2700). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

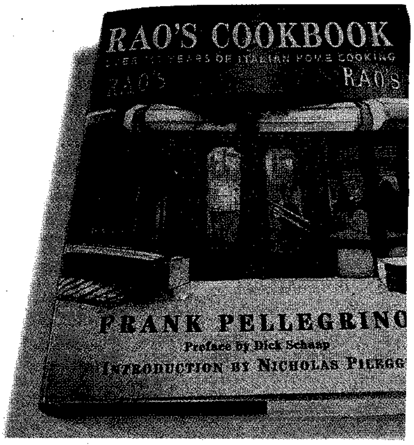
The Four Seasons—Philip Johnson designed this cathedral of modernity. Picasso did the tapestry. And the place remains a classic 30 years later. The Grill Room is where the term *power lunch* got its start in the seventies. The pool room is where the rest of us go for achingly expensive fare like foie gras and figs and chocolate velvet. *99 E. 52nd St. (754-9494). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Fresco—It's a family affair: The Scottos, including broadcasting star Rosanna, have created a room where you'll find stars at your feet and hearty portions of modern Tuscan fare (rich homemade pasta, thin and crispy grilled pizza, chops and fish) on the table. *34 E. 52nd St. (935-3434). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Giambelli 50th Ristorante—Upscale Northern Italian fare served in a warm and cozy atmosphere. The chef imports esoteric varieties of pasta from Italy to prepare his specialties; the fish and meat dishes are as carefully considered. *46 E. 50th St. (688-2760). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Istana—Situated in the lobby of the New York Palace hotel, this Mediterranean newcomer is rightfully proud of its olive bar, the only one, chances are, of its kind. Tapas are ideal cocktail accompaniments; heartier appetites are readily satisfied by paella-style roasted fish, pumpkin ravioli with walnuts, or baby chicken with Tunisian spices. *455 Madison Ave., at 51st St. (303-6032). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

In Print **Whoever thinks Balthazar is a hot ticket has never tried to make a reservation at Rao's, the nearly impenetrable East Harlem landmark Woody Allen calls "probably my favorite place to eat in New York." The ten tables, prized by regulars who "own" them on their given night of the week, are traded and shared as schedules and generosity dictate. For all the forlorn refuseniks—and they are legion—Random House has published *Rao's Cookbook* ($40), with an introduction by Nick Pileggi, a preface by Dick Schaap, and basic Neapolitan recipes for the house marinara, lemon chicken, seafood salad, and roasted peppers. You'll have to conjure up the celebrity photos and ever-present Christmas lights.**



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Lespinasse—Marie Antoinette, where are you? This ultra-formal dining room in the St. Regis Hotel—think Versailles and you get the rococo drift—is where you'll find Gray Kunz's inventive Franco-Oriental cooking. The $44 prix fixe at lunch is a gentle introduction to exactly what wonders chef Kunz can perform. *2 E. 55th St., in the St. Regis Hotel (339-6719). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Monkey Bar—Chef Kurt Gutenbrunner left David Bouley's kitchen to man the stoves at midtown's elegantly reconstructed Monkey Bar. His refined style—deliberately devoid of most butter, cream, and rich sauces—is evident in chestnut soup with Armagnac prunes, yellowfin-tuna tartar, venison stew with herb spaetzle, and scallops with vanilla endive and tropical fruits. *60 E. 54th St. (838-2600). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Morton's of Chicago—This midwestern import has taken Manhattan by storm, winning converts with its tender double porterhouse and men's club charm. Hard to believe it's a chain. *551 Fifth Ave., at 45th St. (972-3315). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Naples 45 Ristorante e Pizzeria—This new, sprawling Italian restaurant and carry-out in the MetLife building serves authentic Neapolitan cuisine, including excellent thin-crust pizzas, baked to order by experienced pizza masters imported directly from Italy. Also try the twice-baked sandwiches and the wide array of wines by the glass. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (972-7001). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

The Park Restaurant—The plush surroundings in this new hotel-lobby restaurant are much fussier, but no more elegant, than the French-American fare concocted by ex-Lespinasse chef Fabrizzio Salerni. Sample dishes include porcini risotto, yellowfin-tuna tartare in wheat crust, steak-frites, and pan-roasted halibut in crispy rice paper. Piano music performed nightly, and cigar smokers have their own private lounge in which to indulge. *109 E. 56th St. (750-5656). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Peacock Alley—Under talented new chef Laurent Gras, the Waldorf's posh dining room has become reinvigorated. Known for his long association with French national hero Alain Ducasse, Gras has a special touch with foie gras and handles seasonal American ingredients with a classical Gallic touch. This is one of midtown's secret pleasures. Jackets required; harpist performs nightly. *301 Park Ave., in the Waldorf-Astoria (872-4895). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Shinbashi—After nearly a quarter of a century, this elegant Japanese restaurant is still an oasis in the frenzy of midtown. Owner Fumiko Hosoda offers a traditional menu of tempura, sukiyaki, teriyaki, and sushi, plus an array of chef's specialties. *280 Park Ave., at 48th St. (661-3915). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

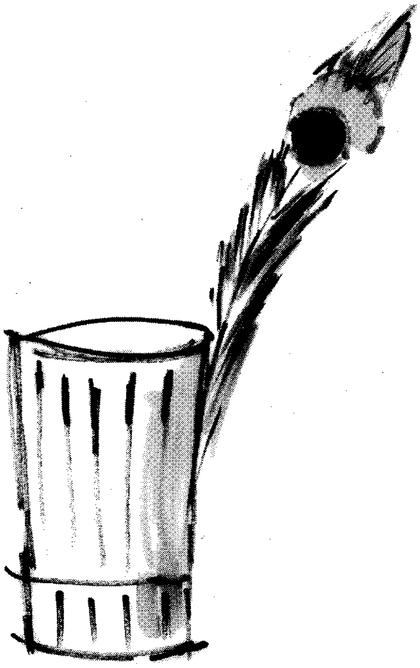
Tatou—Gilded-plaster satyrs, cherubs, jazz onstage, and New American cuisine. Executive chef Neal Myers, formerly of Ben Benson's, transports his expertise with meats and creatively prepared seafood, like pepper-crusted tuna with winter squash and black vinegar sauce, and crab cakes accompanied by cole slaw rolls. Try something from the extensive raw-bar menu. *151 E. 50th St. (753-1144). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Tropica—Always packed at lunch, but squeeze in at the bar and order the salmon and a glass of tropical iced tea. The dining room serves the most imaginative seafood in town, but be sure to go on a weekday—the restaurant, located in the lobby of the MetLife Building, is closed Saturday and Sunday. *200 Park Ave., nr. 45th St. (867-6767). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

American Festival Cafe—Lunch inside this glamorized eatery with rotating American folk art. Skaters in winter and a garden in the summer and early fall make for fierce window-seat competition. *Rockefeller Plaza, 20 W. 50th St. (332-7620). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Barbetta—This elegant theater-district landmark is still owned, incredibly, by its founding family. The elaborate interior provides a peaceful background for regional specialties like fonduta, rabbit alla Piedmontese, and a variety of wild-game dishes. A



Just in case you missed
The New York Times
review of Peacock Alley
and our exciting
new chef
Laurent Gras,
here's a quick
summary:

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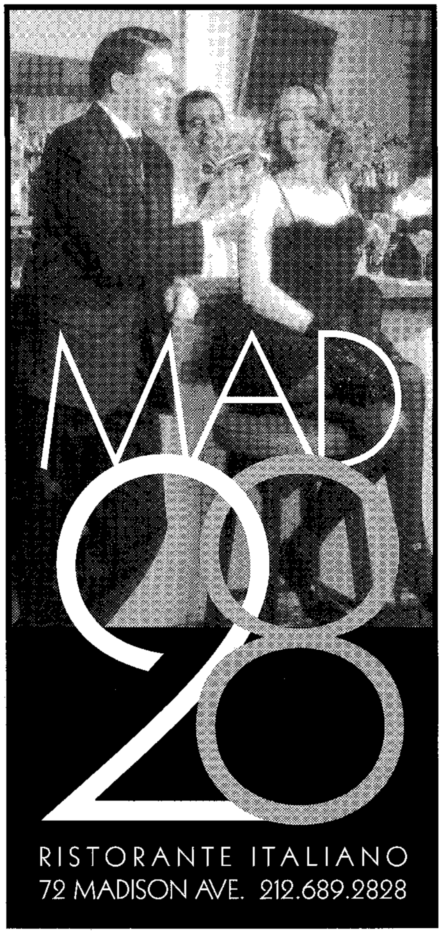

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$55 spring tasting menu features new fish dishes. The garden is a summertime oasis. *321 W. 46th St. (246-9171). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Ben Benson's Steak House—This rollicking steakhouse has long fed hordes of hungry, beef-eating businessmen and the people who love them. The festive air gets pretty thick by the bar, where cigars prevail, but the dining room is entirely devoted to the consumption of standards like lobsters, crab cakes, veal, and four cuts of steak. Free validated parking available. *123 W. 52nd St. (581-8888). (E) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Broadway Joe—Located in a townhouse on Restaurant Row, this steakhouse serves a fourteen-ounce prime rib but also delivers fresh seafood and pasta for the omnivore. Hirschfeld caricatures cover the walls, so come find your NINAS while you dine. Discount dinner parking. Private parties. *315 W. 46th St. (246-6513). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

C2 at the China Club—The restaurant at the newly relocated China Club is conspicuously upscale for its Eighth Avenue address and surprisingly calm for its affiliation with the dance club upstairs. Chef Eban Ross has created an eclectic menu of Asian-influenced dishes like tuna-and-salmon tartare with daikon-hijiki slaw and braised lamb shank with maple-roasted acorn squash. *268 W. 47th St. (398-3800). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Restaurant Charlotte—Offers a refuge from the hubbub and hustle of Times Square. Consistent American cuisine, from grilled sirloin and mashed potatoes to mushroom-dusted cod, in a postmodern setting. *145 W. 44th St., in the Millennium Broadway (789-7508). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Christer's—Famous for its spectacular selection of salmon, this Scandinavian-inspired restaurant, designed by David Rockwell to resemble a colorful, cozy mountain lodge, is a great choice for contemporary renditions of seafood. Open Sundays. *145 W. 55th St. (974-7224). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Cité—An extravagant French steakhouse, marble and pewter with blazing chandeliers, and a more affordable grill next door. *120 W. 51st St. (956-7100). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Commonwealth Grill & Brewery—This Boston brewery import in Rockefeller Plaza attracts a riotous after-work crowd for its craft beers. The lunch and dinner menus feature American fare like grilled swordfish over lemon pasta, braised lamb shank, duck breast, and tuna, not to mention the obligatory burger. *35 W. 48th St. (977-2269). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

"44"—Still the first stop for the officers of the Condé Nast empire. Deeply plush, windowless décor feels like the center of the Earth. Given the theatricality, surprisingly terrific food. *44 W. 44th St., in the Royalton (944-8844). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Johnnie's—This small, old-world Italian restaurant has been a midtown fixture for over three and a half decades. The menu runs the gamut from basic pastas to chicken, veal, and seafood dishes; the $14.95 dinner special is a particularly good deal. *135 W. 45th St. (869-5565). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

La Veranda—Northern Italian food. A popular spot in the theater district offering generous portions of fish, seafood, veal chops and pasta. *163 W. 47th St. (391-0905). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Langan's—American cuisine in a clublike setting. Food ranges from Black Angus steaks to crab cakes and seafood. A trendy, well-heeled crowd at the much-frequented bar mixes with theatergoers in the dining room. *150 W. 47th St. (869-5482). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Le Bernardin—French-born Eric Ripert carries forth the quest of his predecessor, the late Gilbert Le Coze, for the world's most spectacular seafood. His ambitious signature dishes—scallops and foie gras with truffles, Spanish-style mackerel in Jerez vinegar, saddle of monkfish—have already won a very loyal following. *155 W. 51st St. (489-1515). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Les Pyrenées—French Provençal cuisine. Cassoulet from Toulouse recommended, as well as filet mignon and frogs' legs. A rustic atmosphere. A lot of theatergoers. *251 W. 51st St. (246-0044). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Martini's—Convenient for pre- and post-theater dining, with a buzzing year-round sidewalk café and chef Richard Krause's rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and, of course, multiple variations of the house drink. *810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (767-1717). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

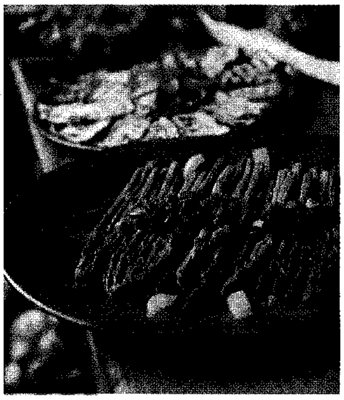
Molyvos—This interpretive Greek restaurant a stone's throw from Carnegie Hall is a large, stylishly rustic showcase for chef Jim Botsacos's serious Mediterranean menu. Sit at one of the tables up front for drinks and meze, or indulge larger appetites with dishes like grilled octopus, rabbit stifado, and vegetable dolmades. *871 Seventh Ave., nr. 55th St. (582-7500). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Osteria del Circo—The restaurant of the moment, partly because of its excellent bloodlines (Sirio Maccioni's brood of charming sons runs the place) and partly because of its flavorful, home-style Italian menu. Be sure to try anything created by proud mother (and food consultant) Mrs. Maccioni. *120 W. 55th St. (265-3636). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Opening

Table Mates

It's rare that a restaurant of Da Beco's evident quality and hospitality eludes public attention for long. The only way to account for any empty tables in the recently opened Tuscan trattoria is to consider the combined effect of its off-the-beaten-track Kips Bay location and the owners' unassuming (but gracious) manners. Montenegrin natives and childhood friends Sali Hadzi (pictured below, left), who also owns the much-acclaimed Il Cenácolo restaurant in Newburgh, New York, and Beco Dibra (right), a chef who's worked at Il Cantinori, have distinguished their first Manhattan venture from the city's hordes of pasta palaces with sincerely friendly service and an especially fine hand with the sauce in the daily pasta and seafood specials (entrées $14.50 to $21.50). The tantalizing antipasto and dessert displays at the entrance make it practically impossible to skip either course. (517 Second Avenue, near 29th Street; 448-9505.)



Pig and Whistle—This is midtown's notion of an Irish bar. A business clientele and a coming-and-going-to-the-theater crowd can find Irish specialties—both solid and liquid—here. *165 W. 47th St. (302-0112). (M) AE, MC, V.*

SeaGrill—Plush, cozy dining room opens to garden tables in the summer and offers a view of the Rockefeller Center skating rink in winter. The serving team does cartwheels toting crab cakes with two sauces, lobster salad with couscous in spicy lobster oil, and pepper-seared tuna steak at premium prices. *Rockefeller Plaza, 19 W. 49th St. (332-7610). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Stage Delicatessen—A landmark deli that serves gigantic sandwiches, every one of which is worth returning for. *834 Seventh Ave., nr. 54th St. (245-7850). (I) AE, MC, V.*

Tapika—Chef David Walzog's spicy cooking has transformed a formerly subdued space into a lively canteen with his version of haute Southwestern. Try the black-bean purée with chorizo and garlic flatbread or the grilled rabbit loin with cilantro oil and habanero sauce. The bar has its own snack menu and a super selection of microbrews and tequilas. *950 Eighth Ave., at 56th St. (397-3737). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Tennessee Mountain Restaurant & Saloon—The midtown offshoot of a SoHo rib joint, this much larger duplex restaurant serves an extensive southern barbecue menu. Tchotchkes can be had at the "general store" souvenir stand, and cigar smokers have their own room in which to exhale. The barbecued and hickory-smoked ribs have already made a major impression on Manhattan meat-lovers. *121 W. 45th St. (869-4545). (I–M) AE, DC, MC,.TM, V.*

Torre di Pisa—David Rockwell designed this midtown Italian import as a surreal version of the Leaning Tower. Pane fritto con prosciutto di Parma and fagotto al funghi porcini are examples of the chef's updated Tuscan standards. A separate cigar/smoking room is available for private parties. *19 W. 44th St. (398-4400). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Victor's Cafe 52—A venerable neighborhood haunt with tropical flair. Try the Cuban sandwich or the roast suckling pork. *236 W. 52nd St. (586-7714). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

57th–60th Streets

Café Botanica—This American restaurant in the Essex House hotel is an airy, plant-filled respite from the congestion of Central Park South. Sunday brunch is a neighborhood fixture; at night, sample the chef's renditions of poached tuna Niçoise and rack of lamb. *160 Central Park So. (484-5120). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

California Pizza Kitchen—With its 27 varieties of wood-fired pizzas from the open kitchen, CPK has finally arrived in New York City. Of course, those varieties include Thai-chicken and BLT pizzas. There is also a kids' menu. All menu items are under $10. *201 E. 60th St. (755-7773). (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Contrapunto—Join the queue in this good-looking, updated restaurant that's added a roster of sophisticated meat and seafood dishes to its renowned pastas. *200 E. 60th St. (751-8616). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven—The country's entertainment-industry glitterati make themselves right at home in I. M. Pei's monumental dining room. Susan Weaver is one of the only working chefs to combine contemporary presentation and technique with classic Provençal on one plate. The weekend bar scene puts the concept-hotel bar scene to shame. *57 E. 57th St. (758-5700). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Les Célébrités—Plush and elegant, this Art Deco dining room in the Essex House on Central Park South also happens to have a very fine kitchen, turning out dishes like pyramid of tuna tartar and grilled tuna, and roasted lobster with vanilla bean and lemon pasta. And the artwork on the walls is by some very high-profile, and surprising, nonprofessionals. Dinner only; jacket required. *155 W. 58th St. (484-5113). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

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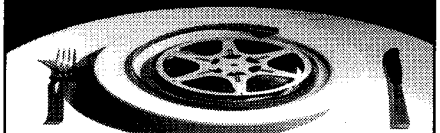

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PENANG

ramics and Brazilian-red-cherry floors. *57 W. 58th St. (371-7777). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Pondicherry—Although the entrance is situated directly next to the Paris Theatre, this new restaurant is somewhat sequestered down a flight of stairs. But the serene, comfortable environs are anything but cramped. Filmmaker Ismail Merchant is credited with contributing several recipes to chef Jean-Luc Kieffer's French-Indian menu. Some representative dishes include bouillabaisse, chicken biryani, Mauritius-style lamb, and grouper in banana leaf "papillote." *8 W. 58th St. (750-7474). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Rosa Mexicano—Did someone say "fresh-pomegranate margarita"? Yes, someone did. What's more, this spot prepares your guacamole tableside (a south-of-the-border hibachi?). Some of the tastier gourmet Mexican in the city. *1063 First Ave., at 58th St. (753-7407). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

San Domenico—Toques off to owner Tony May, who may have done more for the cause of serious Italian cooking in New York than any other single restaurateur. His dining room is formal, and the food is wonderful. *240 Central Park So. (265-5959). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, East Side

Boxers—This uptown outpost of the Greenwich Village Boxers has a similar menu of American staples like chicken potpie, burgers, and steaks. This spot, in the shadow of the Queensboro Bridge, enjoys the distinction of being one of the birthplaces of the Upper East Side swinging singles scene. In fact, the Tom Cruise vehicle *Cocktail* was filmed on the premises. *1152 First Ave., at 63rd St. (688-9663). (I) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Club Macanudo—This plush, elegant shrine to cigar-smoking also offers, besides an astonishing selection of smokes, a sophisticated variety of edibles. The American menu, listing such offbeat items as warm lobster enchiladas and pork loin with coffee-barbecue sauce, takes inspiration from Latin and Caribbean cuisines. Jackets required. *26 E. 63rd St. (752-8200). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Decade—This place bills itself as the Classic Rock Supper Club, and thus appeals to the sort of over-30 crowd that would know exactly what classic means. Besides dinner—which could be pan-seared wild salmon with a horseradish-potato crust, duck-confit-and-vegetable spring roll, or Arctic char in a fennel consommé—there's a 4,000-bottle wine vault, nearly 200 humidors, and original artwork by Warhol and Rosenquist. And dancing, of course. Jackets required. *1117 First Ave., at 61st St. (835-5979). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

El Pollo—This Peruvian chicken joint has stuck with its simple, minimal menu, to the benefit of this otherwise barren neighborhood. Potatoes come four ways, but you can't miss with the incredible curly fries. *1746 First Ave., nr. 90th St. (996-7810). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

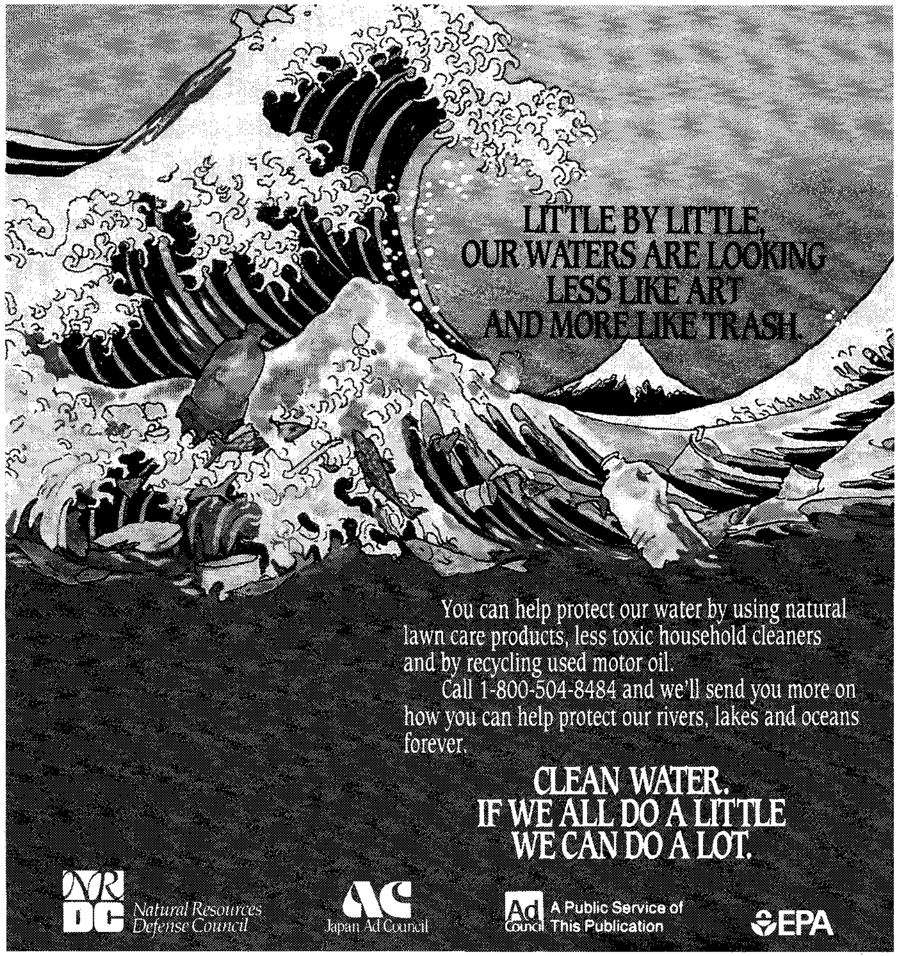
Giovanni 25—This elegant regional Italian restaurant has a loyal neighborhood following that partakes of a menu heavy on game and dishes luxurified with seasonal truffles. Try the Dover sole and the black risotto with cuttlefish. *25 E. 83rd St. (988-7300). (M–E) AE, DS, MC, V.*

JoJo—The grilled chicken with chickpea frites is a great dish. But then, Jean-Georges Vongerichten doesn't make many mistakes in this elegant, jewel-like dining room situated on two floors of an East Sixties townhouse. Lunch upstairs, overlooking the street, is especially lovely. *160 E. 64th St. (223-5656). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Mark's—Decked out like an English library, with plump, tasseled pillows to nest against. Fine East-West cooking and first-rate desserts. *25 E. 77th St., in the Mark Hotel (879-1864). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Mesa City—Bobby Flay's uptown bastion of innovative southwestern fare offers dishes like mango-glazed tuna steak and tortilla-crusted grouper. The bar attracts regulars with the house margarita, spiked with cactus-pear juice, and its selection of twenty brands of tequila. *1059 Third Ave., nr. 62nd St. (207-1919). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Nino's—Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled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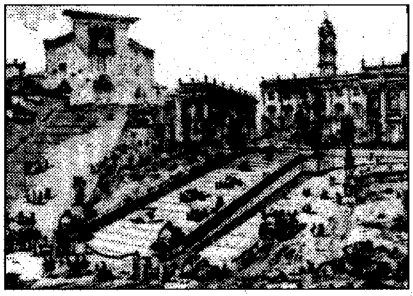

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dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. *1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (988-0002). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Park Avenue Cafe—A polished, countrified American café for business lunches and off-duty get-to-know-yous in the evening. Chef David Burke makes the tired catchall "American fare" sing, and keeps the haute neighbors rapt with signature dishes like rack of lamb and his swordfish chop. *100 E. 63rd St. (644-1900). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Park View at the Boathouse—This Central Park landmark has been renovated and updated with an Asian-influenced menu from new chef John Villa. Technical improvements have made it possible to keep the restaurant on the lake open all year round, though those who miss visiting it during the summer months do so at their own peril. Choose among new menu items like jumbo lump-crab gyoza and coriander-spiced tuna loin. *Central Park, nr. 72nd St. and Fifth Ave. (517-2233). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *1596 Second Ave., nr. 83rd St. (585-3838). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Post House—Clubby and comfortable, this handsome dining room specializes in good quality and big portions. The peppery Cajun-style steak is a favorite, especially with a side order of French fries or onion rings. There are dishes with decidedly less cholesterol—poached salmon, say, or lemon chicken—but this isn't a place to watch your waistline. Seriously. *28 E. 63rd St., in the Lowell Hotel (935-2888). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Primavera—This elegant uptown restaurant serves sophisticated renditions of Northern Italian food, like baby eels with oil and garlic, and roasted baby goat. The comfortable wood-paneled room, lit with antique fixtures and filled with fresh flowers, brings a touch of luxury to the neighborhood. *1578 First Ave., nr. 82nd St. (861-8608). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Vermicelli—The décor of this restaurant is meant to evoke a much milder version of the Vietnamese jungle, with birdcage fixtures and a bamboo bar. Try the crispy shrimp rolls, cracked lobster with a ginger-scallion-and-honey sauce, or the grilled pork chop. *1492 Second Ave., nr. 77th St. (288-8868). (I) AE, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, West Side

The Evelyn Lounge—A lounge-style bar uncommon on the Upper West Side, with the requisite couches, armchairs, Oriental rugs and, upstairs, a cozy restaurant serving an accessible American menu of roast chicken, pork chops, steak, and burgers. *380 Columbus Ave., at 78th St. (724-2363). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

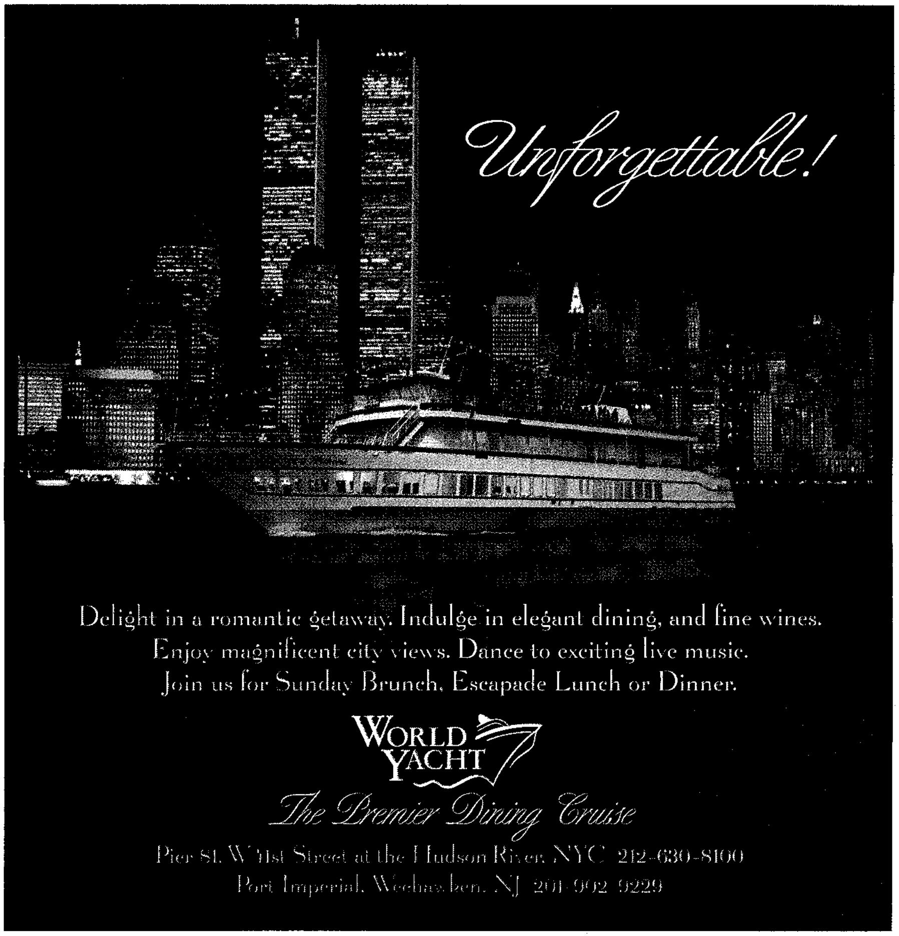
Gabriela's—Real Mexican food. Don't come here for bulging burritos, but for fragrant chicken soup, steamed tamales that taste like corn, and tender pork marinated in Seville orange juice and spices. Try the *licuados*, fruit shakes, and the *aguas frescas*, fresh-fruit drinks, to cool off. *685 Amsterdam Ave., at 93rd St. (961-0574). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

La Caridad—Chino-Latino soul food in a neighborhood notoriously devoid of restaurant personality. Mammoth portions, enormous lines. *2199 Broadway, at 78th St. (874-2780). (I) ($).*

Londel's—Food cooked soulfully on a blooming strip off Strivers Row. Live music most nights and velvet rope at the front door create an ambience not often associated with home cooking. Try the smothered pork chops, but be forewarned: Everything's cooked to order—*slow*-cooked to order. *2620 Frederick Douglass Blvd., at 140th St. (234-6114). (I–M) CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

M&G Diner—Dropping-off-the-bone short-rib sandwiches at the counter and low-key comfort. Jukebox is worth scanning. *383 W. 125th St. (864-7326). (I) ($).*

Mendy's West—This kosher deli proudly claims to be New York's only Jewish sports bar and serves hearty American fare like soups, salads, steaks, and



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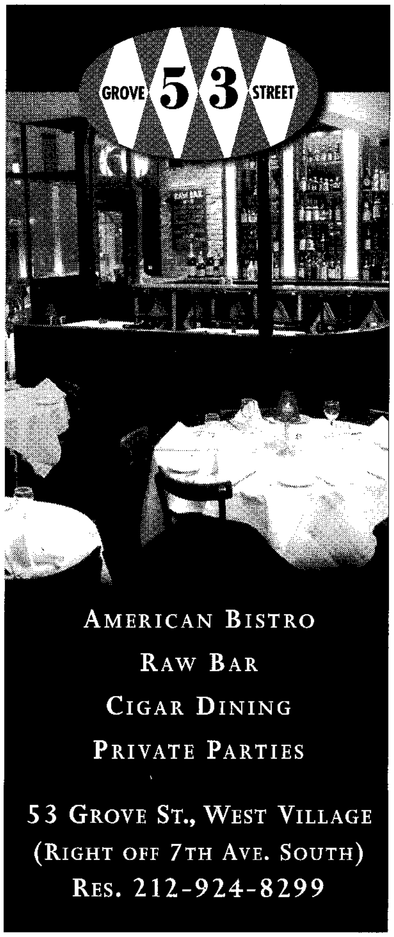

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chops. *208 W. 70th St. (877-6787). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *240 Columbus Ave., at 71st St. (769-3988). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Picholine—Chef Terrance Brennan's French-Mediterranean cuisine is as beautiful to look at as it is delicious to eat. Try the risotto, smoky with tender duck and wild mushrooms, and velvety foie gras with peach coulis, and save room for a glass of port to accompany the amazingly rich and well-chosen cheese course. *35 W. 64th St. (724-8585). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Restaurant 222—Cozy and romantic, with the feel of a townhouse, Frank Valenza's top-rated New American West Sider is a luxurious surprise in a neighborhood nearly bereft of them. The $42.50 dinner prix fixe, available Sunday through Thursday, is a great deal. *222 W. 79th St. (799-0400). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Sarabeth's—This New York institution is a homey place for upscale down-home food like chicken potpie and pancakes. It also offers a children's menu and a mouth-watering bakery counter, with homemade, award-winning jams and preserves. *423 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 80th St. (496-6280). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Sylvia's—A staple of the neighborhood, with a tradition and ambience strong enough to draw loyal customers from uptown and downtown. Live entertainment that truly aids digestion. *328 Lenox Ave., bet. 126th and 127th Sts. (996-0660). (I) ($).*

Tavern on the Green—A must for your country cousin. This mazelike collection of dining rooms, each with a view of the park better than the previous one's, is worth cutting the hansom-cab ride short for. *Central Park at 67th St. (873-3200). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Wells—A talked-about chicken-and-waffle combination. One way or another, this restaurant has been a neighborhood mainstay for nearly 60 years. *2247 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., at 132nd St. (234-0700). (M) AE, MC, V.*

West 63rd Street Steakhouse—Mahogany tables and red suede walls make this nice-ified steakhouse less stultifying than its midtown brethren. Twenty-foot ceilings allow for a spectacular view of Lincoln Center, and there are seafood and pasta for those who enjoy the company of a meat-eater. *44 W. 63rd St. (246-6363). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Brooklyn

Cucina—A labor of love. Northern Italian in an elegant and very well appointed room. Sensational antipasti. *256 Fifth Ave., nr. Garfield Pl. (718-230-0711). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Lundy Bros.—This restored landmark restaurant serves a wide-ranging menu of fish, pasta, chicken, and steak but specializes in lobster and other varieties of seafood. Don't miss the oyster bar or the reconstructed shore dinner. Sunday brunch buffet available. *1901 Emmons Ave. (718-743-0022). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Peter Luger's—Steak for one, steak for two, steak for four, and creamed spinach. Apply for your own house credit card, or bring cash. *178 Broadway, at Bedford Ave. (718-387-7400). (E) ($).*

Two Tom's—Firehouse-kitchen ambience and a waiter who tells you what you want to eat. The double-rib pork chops are peerless, and the escarole is great, too, but refuse the mercilessly overcooked pasta when it's offered. Eat early during the week and call ahead on weekends. Regular private parties make getting a table frustrating, but it's always worth the trouble. *255 Third Ave., nr. Union St. (718-875-8689). (I) ($).*

Queens

Elias Corner—Mix with the locals in Astoria as they queue up for a table at this Greek fish tavern. Don't wait for a menu; it won't come. Instead, eyeball the counter as you enter. If the offerings look like today's catch, they are. The owner fetches the fish each morning. Opt for the deep-fried, pinky-size bait fish over the squid. *24-01 31st St., at Astoria Blvd. (718-932-1510). (M) ($).*

Pearson's Texas Barbecue—Deservedly heralded as New York's best barbecue, this cozy Queens joint draws fans from much farther than across the East River. The barbecued Texas beef is sublime. *5-16 51st Ave., Long Island City (718-937-3030). (I) ($).*

Bronx

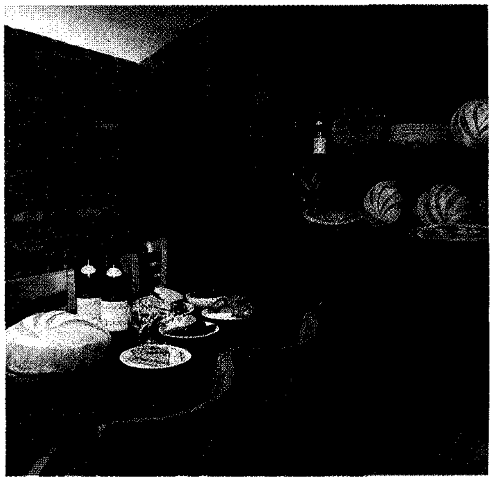
Cafe Sevilla—A cozy Spanish restaurant that people travel to from as far away as Yonkers. Try the chicken and rice and the seafood gumbo accompanied by sweet and garlicky plantains. *1209 White Plains Rd., nr. Westchester Ave. (718-792-3367). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Staten Island

Aesop's Tables—Arrive by ferry or bridge to this charming bistro and garden that serves inventive, bold Mediterranean fare with an emphasis on handpicked fresh seafood. *1233 Bay St., Rosebank (718-720-2005). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Opening
Baby Blue

Having already conquered the worlds of sushi and late-night dining, brothers Bruce and Eric Bromberg expand their burgeoning Blue Ribbon empire with the multifaceted Blue Ribbon Bakery, opening this weekend at 33 Downing Street (337-0404). A rebuilt 1906 stone oven will dispense all-American white bread for sale upstairs in the retail market—which doubles, ingeniously, as a casual wine bar. The two downstairs dining rooms, carefully restored with beams and bricks salvaged from local demolition sites, will offer an eclectic menu heavy on charcuterie and salads.



Photograph by Robert Wright.

nightlife

Folkways at 50...*Largo* Live...Disco Divas

Concerts

Jimmy Bosch—Marc Anthony's musical director and erstwhile Orquesta Libre trombonist leads his own intense salsa unit, in honor of his new album, *Singing Trombone.* 5/3 at 8:30 and 10:30 P.M. *El Flamingo, 547 W. 21st St. (243-2121). $5–$10.*

Disco Divas—A dance floor is probably the best place to appreciate Gloria Gaynor, Vickie Sue Robinson, Evelyn "Champagne" King, Carol Douglas, and Musique. However, given disco's continued undervalued status as a legitimate and musically complex genre, a swank concert hall probably isn't a bad location, either. 5/1 at 8 P.M. *Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (840-2824). $15–$25.*

"Folkways at Fifty"—Pete Seeger, Dar Williams, Lucinda Williams, Bernice Johnson Reagon, the SNCC Freedom Singers, Mickey Hart, the New Lost City Ramblers, Toshi Reagon, Ossie Davis, Ella Jenkins, and numerous others celebrate the storied record label's demi-centenary in a less-than-folksy setting. (See box, page 170.) 5/1 at 8 P.M. *Carnegie Hall, 157 W. 57th St. (248-7800). $25–$250.*

"The Greatest Hits of Richard Rodgers"—Hosted by Jan Neuberger, the latest installment in the Lyrics & Lyricists series features Mike Burstyn, Claiborne Cary, Marc Hardy, Margaret Whiting, and Julie Budd running through highlights from *Oklahoma, Carousel, South Pacific, The Sound of Music,* and *Pal Joey.* 5/2 at 8 P.M., 5/3 at 2:30 and 8 P.M., 5/4 at 2 and 8 P.M. *92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100). $35–$38.*

Mother's Day Celebration With Christine Crawford—Sure, you could send Mom another schmaltzy card. But you could also bring her down to Town Hall for a screening of *Mommie Dearest* and a discussion with the issue-ridden Ms. Crawford and Rex Reed. (Did we mention the Joan Crawford drag performance by John "Lipsynka" Kelly?) Now *that's* the way to family harmony. 5/6 at 7 P.M. *Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (840-2824). $25–$35.*

Noa—In honor of her homeland's fiftieth anniversary, the Israeli pop superstar (given name: Achinoam Nini) smoothly blends Middle Eastern music, light jazz, and sultry pop into a frothy, celebratory cocktail. 5/2 at 8:30 P.M. *BAM Opera House, 30 Lafayette Ave. (718-636-4100). $15–$35.*

Marcus Roberts—The third installment in the pianist's "Evolution of Blues and Swing" trilogy, with works by Duke Ellington, Cole Porter, and Scott Joplin. 4/30–5/1 at 8 P.M. *Kaplan Penthouse, Rose Building, 165 W. 65th St. (875-5599). $37.50.*

Trance Music & Dance of Morocco—Downtown fave Hassan Hakmoun and Amid Boussou hypnotize audiences with swirling, repetitious beats and soaring harmonies. 5/2 at 8 P.M. *Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (840-2824). $25–$30.*

Clubland

Acme Underground—Once a skanky afterthought beneath a Cajun eatery, this intimate club has been overhauled and cleaned up and—thanks to former Maxwell's booker Todd Abramson—become an unlikely venue of choice for big-name rockers. 5/1–5/2: A nationwide sensation by the age of 16, thanks to his gruff-beyond-his-years tenor, Alex Chilton graduated from the Boxtops' pinup stardom to Big Star's cult-icon status around the same time he graduated from high school. Having recently reunited with both groups, the pop legend brings it back down to the basics with a two-night solo gig. *9 Great Jones St., downstairs (420-1934). $.*

Talent
Bevis: No Butt-heads

One of England's most enigmatic musical exports, the Bevis Frond is at once impossible to pin down and gratifyingly easy to sink your teeth into. Over the past decade, the Frond has released more than a dozen albums of its hooky, satisfying, psychedelic pop. Meanwhile, its wildly talented, medieval-haired singer, guitarist, and all-around driving force, Nick Saloman (center), has collaborated on scads of other albums—most recently, Mary Lou Lord's major-label debut. But despite the band's cult status on both sides of the Atlantic, the Bevis Frond has played just a few shows in the United States—and only one with all three members. May 2, though, the full group makes its New York debut at the Knitting Factory, a date that coincides roughly with the release of the Bevis Frond's fourteenth album, *North Circular*—and (one hopes) its much-deserved ascent from obscurity.

Photograph by Charles Peterson.

Arlene Grocery—The Lower East Side's newish, hippish, and appealingly inexpensive (okay, free) rock and folk venue. 4/28: Heather Eatman. 4/29: Mary Lee Cortes. 4/30: Babe the Blue Ox; Christine Ohlman. *95 Stanton St. (358-1633). $.*

Bottom Line—A top-notch venue—with great sound, good sight lines, and pretty decent fries—given to rock, jazz, and folk artists of all stripes. 5/1: Roger Hodgson. 5/2: The Klezmatics. 5/4: The Call. 5/5: Tom Chapin, John McCutcheon and Friends, Martin Simpson. 5/6: *Largo* live, with Joan Osborne, Taj Mahal, Garth Hudson, Willie Nile. (See box, page 171.) *15 W. 4th St. (228-7880).*

Chicago B.L.U.E.S.—A downtown blueserie, comfortably down-home, with living-room couches behind the stage. Dedicated to bringing us the best and brightest from the midwestern blues capital. 5/1–5/2: Buddy Miles. *73 Eighth Ave., bet. 13th and 14th Sts. (924-9755). $.*

China Club—Having moved out of its Upper West Side basement and into a second-floor Hell's Kitchen location, the eighties' most infamous den of iniquity has gone more or less legit, with a swanky restaurant, cigars aplenty, and bathroom attendants to keep illicit nasal-pipe-cleaning to a minimum. *268 W. 47th St. (398-3800).*

Coney Island High—Originally a glam-trash revival hall, this two-level East Village funhouse now reflects the neighborhood's cultural diversity, with indie-rock and punk bands sharing the venue with some of the city's wackiest parties. 4/28: U.S. Bombs. 4/29: I.C.U. 4/30: Shift; Man Will Surrender. 5/1: The Business; Ann Berretta. 5/2: ? and the Mysterians, the Prissteens, Demolition Doll Rods. 5/3: Disassociate. 5/4: Honor Among Thieves. *15 St. Marks Pl. (674-7959).*

The Cooler—The meatpacking district's subterranean, steel-corridored home to alternative rockers, avant-garde-jazz musicians, and mind-expanding D.J.'s. A sleekly refurbished meat locker with black light, moody atmosphere, and a Patti Smith photo. 4/29: Spaceheads. 5/1: D.J. collective the X-Ecutioners dazzle and amaze with their turntable pyrotechnics. But they're not about flash: A precise unit as synchronized as the gears of a Swiss watch, the quartet never loses sight of its deeply funky mission. 5/2: Shinehead. 5/4: Godspeed, You Black Emperor. *416 W. 14th St. (229-0785).*

Fez—Mingus fever and lush *faux*-Moroccan ambience make this the neo-boho place to be on Thursdays, when the mighty Mingus Big Band rocks the house, playing the works of the great, brawling jazz bassist with a freshness and authority rarely seen in jazz today. Wednesday's "Stella" offers some of the finest young stand-up talent in the city. 4/28: Paul Rudderman, Heather Keller, Ké. 4/29: "Loser's Lounge Tribute to Nancy and Lee." 5/2: Sean Altman, Jonathan Gregg, Matt Keating. 5/3: Shequida. 5/4: Lina Koutrakis. 5/5: Lounge-o-Leers, Ké. *Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (533-2680).*

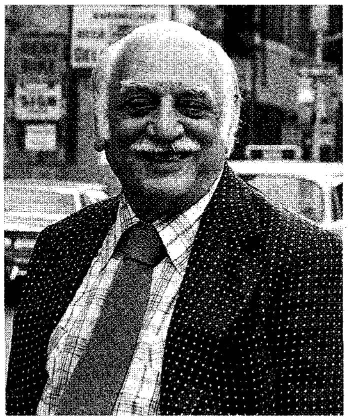
Irving Plaza—A midsize bi-level rock venue with moody chandeliers and a sort of haunted-bordello look. It's a bit of a crush near the stage, but there's an amiable bar, 119, right around the corner for a preshow aperitif. "Savoy Sundays" are weekly swingfests of ballroom dancing. 4/29: Baaba Maal. 5/1: The, Pietasters, Spring Heeled Jack, Amazing Royal Crowns. 5/2: Eighties synth-god Gary Numan walked the line between twinky pop and deep surrealism, particularly in science-fiction-inspired tunes like "Are 'Friends' Electric?" (an homage to Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, which also became Harrison Ford's *Blade Runner*). A distinct oddball the first time around, Numan makes more sense in today's electronica-crazy music scene. Thus, he's making the inevitable comeback bid—to what effect we'll have to wait and see. With Switchblade Symphony. 5/5: David Byrne, King Chango. *17 Irving Pl. (777-6800).*

Performance

Not Just Plain Folks

Plenty of music moguls believe themselves to be touched by genius. But perhaps only Moses Asch (pictured, left)—whose Folkways label was home to such American treasures as Woody Guthrie, Lightnin' Hopkins, and Brownie McGhee—could claim the blessing of Albert Einstein himself. According to Pete Seeger (right), a longtime Folkways artist, Asch met the father of relativity theory in 1936, to record a message encouraging solidarity between American and German Jews. When Einstein asked the 30-year-old recording engineer about his ambitions, Asch mentioned Leadbelly, a captivating folksinger he'd seen perform but whom no record company seemed interested in. Says Seeger, "Einstein said, 'You're right! Americans don't appreciate their own culture. It's going to be a Polish Jew like you who preserves it!' So in 1939, Moe did finally release a Leadbelly album." Despite Einstein's imprimatur, Asch's career got off to a rocky start: He sold around 100 copies of his first release and saw his first two record companies go bankrupt before he started Folkways on May Day, 1948. By the time of his death, in 1986, Folkways had nearly 2,200 albums in its catalogue (the Smithsonian Institution, which now runs the label, has kept them all in print and says Folkways will not be affected by its recently announced plans to discontinue its record division). "Folkways at 50" (Carnegie Hall, May 1) will celebrate the awesome breadth of Asch's lifework with performances by a dizzying array of Folkways veterans. On the bill are sixties activists (Bernice Johnson Reagon, the SNCC Freedom Singers), latter-day folkies (Bernice's daughter, Toshi Reagon; Lucinda Williams), Caribbean musicians (Los Pleneros de la 21), even Grateful Dead alum Mickey Hart. Seeger, who recorded 59 albums for Asch's label, will perform, though he's characteristically modest about the affair. "I can still hit all the notes," he says. "But when I try to hold them, my voice wobbles, like any old man's."

Ethan Smith



Knitting Factory—The Bevis Frond's New York debut, last fall, was a fascinating, low-key affair. Accompanied only by former Hawkwind bassist Adrian Shaw, first Frond Nick Saloman worked through a stellar set of his own psychedelic-pop compositions from ten years of prolific songwriting, couching sensitive, keen observations in understatedly virtuosic guitar work. For pure surrealism, though, the highlight had to be a cover of Arthur Lee's "Everybody's Gotta Live," on which Saloman traded his guitar for that meekest of folk instruments, the dulcimer. Plugging the four-stringed instrument through his amp, Saloman quickly moved beyond the tune's lilting, Beatlesque chords and into a full-on distortion-jam worthy of Jimi Hendrix (the comparison, incidentally, isn't arbitrary: Saloman reportedly got his start opening for Pink Floyd in late-sixties London—in a Hendrix cover band). Here at the Knit, 5/2, Saloman and Shaw are joined by former Camel drummer Andy Ward, and the effect should be that much more entrancingly over-the-top. With Medicine Ball and Kramer. (See box, page 169). 4/27–4/29: Masada. 4/30: Dub Syndicate, John Brown's Body. 5/1: Jon Todd, Wisdom Tooth, Phyler. 5/3: "All House Jew Party," with Yossi Piamenta, Klezmerama, Gary Lucas, Hasidic New Wave, Anthony Coleman, Uri Caine, Student Films from NYC and Israel, Judith Sloan, and poetry readings by Steve Dalachinsky. *74 Leonard St., bet. Broadway and Church St. (219-3055).*

Mercury Lounge—Once a headstone parlor, now one of the city's hippest and most congenial music spots, hosting rock and country artists groomed for the more au courant time slots of MTV. 4/28–4/29: El Oso. 4/30–5/1: Richard Buckner, Chris Knight. 5/3: This Island Earth. 5/4: Shiner, Betty. 5/5: 13 O'Clock, Furious George. 5/6: Madder Rose, Talking to Animals. *217 E. Houston St. (260-4700).*

The Roxy—The cavernous Chelsea institution's deeply entertaining and mysteriously underattended Tuesday- and Wednesday-night roller-skating jam keeps boogie queens' wheels spinning till the wee hours. 5/6: East German techno-goth superstars (and *Lost Highway* soundtrack staples) Rammstein. *515 W. 18th St. (627-0404). $.*

S.O.B.'s—The city's premier world-music venue, presenting many acts that could fill stadia back home. Most nights, sets at 10 and midnight. Chris Combette performs every Friday at 11 P.M. 4/28: Metro Media Sound System. *204 Varick St. (243-4940).*

Tramps—One of the city's better venues for great roots music and happening indie rock, Tramps eschews high concept for straightforward presentation. Avoid the neck-craning mid-stage column by arriving early. 4/28: Das EFX; D.J. Honda. 4/29: Earth Crisis, Hatebreed, One King Down. 4/30: Robin Trower. 5/1: Jason & the Scorchers. 5/2: The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, Andre "Mr. Rhythm" Williams, the Bassholes. *51 W. 21st St. (727-7788).*

Wetlands—A groovy club-kid activist hang with neo-hippie atmosphere and far-flung musical guests. N.B.: Tuesday night is (Grateful) Dead Night. Sunday is the long-running drum-and-bass extravaganza "Konkrete Jungle." 5/1: The Why Store. 5/2: The Blue Rags, Greg Garing. 5/3: We, Byzar. 5/5: Taj Mahal. 5/6: Sonia. *161 Hudson St. (966-5244).*

Jazz

Birdland—More comfortable than the Blue Note, swankier than the Vanguard, and proof that jazz is alive and well in midtown, this classy boîte serves up some fine southern cuisine along with its first-rate lineup. Every Sunday night, Chico O'Farrill's smoking Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra blows the roof off the joint. Every Monday night, the Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra. Tuesdays, the Duke Ellington Orchestra (conducted by 19-year-old Paul Ellington) delves into the late, great bandleader's songbook. Every Friday the Lew Anderson Big Band swings from 5:30 to 7:30. 4/29–5/1: The New Jazz Messengers—an all-star cast of Art Blakey alumni including Benny Golson, Curtis Fuller, Terence Blanchard, and Mulgrew Miller—keeps the funky-bop flame burning. 5/2: Guitar hero, musical visionary, one-man string section: Stanley Jordan defies categorization. So just go see him and decide for yourself what to call him. Sets at 9 and 11 P.M. $10–$30 cover; $10 minimum. *315 W. 44th St. (581-3080).*

Blue Note—With a first-rate sound system and a decent view from every seat in the house, the "jazz capital of the world" often presents two top-flight artists in one evening. Sets at 9 and 11:30 P.M. 4/28–5/3: Johnny Griffin; Jackie McLean Quintet. 5/4: Jon Regen Trio. *131 W. 3rd St. (475-8592).*

Dharma—An elegant little gem of a club, serving funky jazz on the historic shopping thoroughfare—just don't pay retail. *174 Orchard St., bet. Houston and Stanton. (780-0313).*

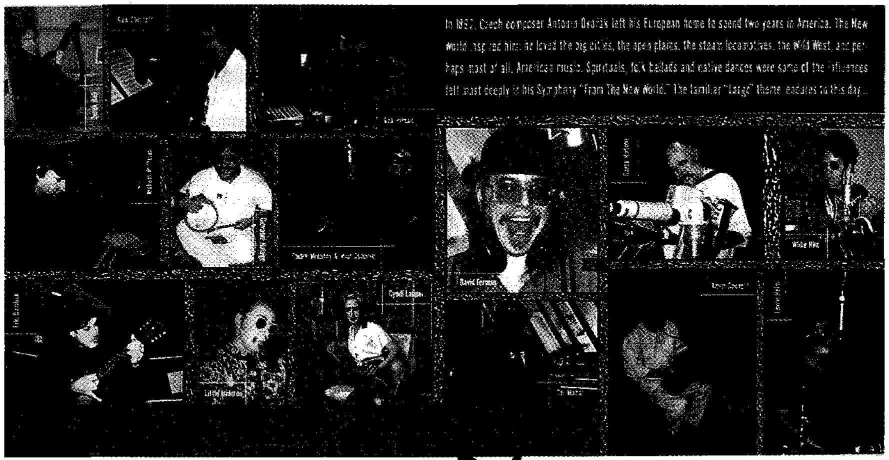
Iridium—Merlot, the artfully wacky restaurant across from Lincoln Center, hosts some formidable jazz comers in its cozy basement, along with the occasional legend. Monday nights, the Les Paul Trio holds office hours. 4/28–5/3: Pharoah Sanders. Sets at 8:30 and 10:30, Sun.–Thurs., with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. *44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (582-2121).*

Jazz at Noon—East midtown's long-running, Friday-afternoon jam session—where Dizzy Gillespie, Clark Terry, and Elvin Jones have all been visiting scholars—returns for its thirty-third season, with the usual high-caliber house band. Noon–2:30 P.M. 5/1: Derek Smith. $5 cover. *San Martin Restaurant, 143 E. 49th St. (832-0888).*

The Jazz Standard—Midtown south's newest, biggest, and happeningest hangout for hard-boppers and the men and women who love them. You can't hear the bands from the swanky first-floor restaurant, but the basement club's modified menu should more than suffice. 4/28–5/3: Kenny Werner Trio. Sets Sun., Tues.–Thurs. at 8 P.M. and 10 P.M., Fri. and Sat. at 8 P.M., 10:30 P.M., and midnight; $10–$15 cover on weekdays, $15–$20 cover on Fri. and Sat. $10 minimum all nights. *116 E. 27th St. (576-2232).*

Knickerbocker Bar & Grill—A wood-paneled and brass-railed restaurant with Old New York ambience and excellent—occasionally legendary—pianists. *33 University Pl. (228-8490).*

Museum of Modern Art—Fridays, in addition to throwing its doors open for pay-what-you-wish


In 1892, Czech composer Antonin Dvořák left his European home to spend two years in America. The New World inspired him: he loved the big cities, the open plains, the steam locomotives, the Wild West, and perhaps most of all, American music. Spirituals, folk ballads and native dances were some of the influences felt most deeply in his Symphony "From The New World." The familiar "Largo" theme endures to this day...

Performance

Key Largo

In 1893, Antonin Dvořák paid homage to American popular music—notably African-American spirituals—with his ninth symphony, 'From the New World.' Perhaps after noting the symphony is in that most rocking of keys, E-minor, a stellar array of latter-day popsters—Levon Helm, Carole King, the Chieftains, and more than a dozen others—recently returned the compliment with 'Largo,' a sixteen-song CD based loosely on the symphony's contemplative second movement. May 6 at the Bottom Line, an inner circle of the album's participants—including Taj Mahal, Joan Osborne, Willie Nile, and Band keyboardist Garth Hudson—play 'Largo,' the concert.

night, MOMA also transforms its cafeteria into a (sort of) swinging jazz club. While no amount of imagination can render the institutional, linoleum-tile décor any more inviting than your average mass feed-trough, the concept *is* fairly happening. 5/1: Abraham Burton Quartet. *11 W. 53rd St. (708-0480).*

Small's—Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post–Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. Every Sunday, the Jazz Composers Forum, followed by the Across Seventh Street Septet. Every Monday, Jason Lindner's youthful, Ellington-meets-Mingus big band. Tuesdays, cerebral and atmospheric guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel leads his quartet. Shows start at 10 P.M. *183 W. 10th St. (929-7565). $.*

Sweet Basil—An intimate downtown restaurant with good food and high-profile jazz acts. Every Saturday, jazz brunch with Ilhan Ersahin. Sundays, Chuck Folds hosts "the original jazz brunch." Every Monday, it's the Spirit of Life Ensemble. Sets at 9 and 11 P.M., with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. 4/28–5/3: Ravi Coltrane Quintet. *88 Seventh Ave. So., at Bleecker St. (242-1785).*

Village Vanguard—Perhaps the world's greatest jazz club, and certainly the most steeped in history, this dark, smoky institution is revered by fans around the world. Study the photos of jazz icons, dig the curtains Miles Davis once played to, and sneak a glance inside the kitchen, an Algonquin Round Table for the bop age. Mondays, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra swings on. Sets at 9:30 and 11:30 P.M. 4/28–5/3: Harold Ashby Quartet, "Celebrating Duke Ellington." *178 Seventh Ave. So., at W. 11th St. (255-4037). $.*

Zinno—Recently renovated, this pretty Italian restaurant has moved its stage into the large dining room—affording good sight lines from most of the tables (though largely obscuring the view from the bar), and shifting the place's feel from restaurant-with-jazz to jazz-club-with-dining. 4/28–5/2: Junior Mance Trio, featuring Byron Stripling. Shows Mon.–Sat. at 8 P.M. *126 W. 13th St. (924-5182).*

Comedy

Carolines Comedy Club—In Times Square just down the street from the *Letterman* show, Carolines hosts big names and talented up-and-comers in its wide, elegant, TV-studio-like basement. Mondays and Tuesdays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. 4/29: Salsoul Sketch Comedy Troupe. *1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (757-4100). $12.50–$18.50, two-drink minimum.*

Catch a Rising Star—Chelsea's high-class variety showplace offers sketch and alternative comedy, theater, and music—all in a theater vaguely reminiscent of the old *Late Night With David Letterman* set. Friday's "The Big Bad Music Show" explores that riskiest of all entertainment territory, humor-rock. Shows Tues. at 8:30 P.M., Wed. and Thurs. at 9 P.M., Fri. and Sat. at 9 and 11 P.M. *253 W. 28th St. (244-3005).*

Chicago City Limits—The long-running and much-ballyhooed troupe, performing their latest, "@ChicagoCityLimits.comedy." Wed.–Thurs. at 8:30 P.M., Fri.–Sat. at 8 and 10:30 P.M. $20 cover. *Chicago City Limits Theatre, 1105 First Ave., at 61st St. (888-LAFF).*

Comedy Cellar—A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city's top comics. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11 P.M.; Sat. at 8:30 P.M., 10:15 P.M., and midnight; and Sun.–Thurs. at 9 P.M. 4/27–5/3: Mitch Fatel, Tim Young, Kevin Brennan, Andre Fernandez, Godfry. *117 MacDougal St. (254-3480).*

Dangerfield's—Founded by the respect-deprived comedian two decades ago, this Vegas-style lounge is one of the city's oldest comedy establishments. Fri. at 9 and 11:15 P.M.; Sat. at 8 P.M., 10:30 P.M., and 12:30 A.M.; Sun.–Thurs., continuous from 8:45 P.M. Cover is $15 Fri. and Sat., $12.50 on weeknights; no minimum. *1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (593-1650).*

Gotham—An elegant, trendy, and palatial comedy spot in the Flatiron district. Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30 P.M., Fri. at 9 and 11 P.M., and Sat. at 8:30 and 10:30 P.M. Cover is $12 Fri. and Sat., $8 on weeknights. Two-drink minimum. 5/1–5/2: Jim Gaffigan; Mitch Fatel; Cory Kahaney. *34 W. 22nd St. (367-9000).*

Ground Rules:

In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. $ = cash only.

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Stand-up New York—Robin Williams is known to drop by here unannounced to warm up for his *Letterman* appearances. Cover is $7–$12. Shows: Sun.–Thurs. at 7, Fri.–Sat. at 7, 9, and 11:30 P.M. *236 W. 78th St. (595-0850).*

Cabaret

Asti—Singing-waiter frolics, with an emphasis on opera and operetta, are the keynote of this Village landmark. *13 E. 12th St. (741-9105).*

Cafe Carlyle—Through 5/2, the incomparable Barbara Cook sings. Bobby Short returns 5/5. Tues.–Sat. Every Monday, Woody Allen swings through the early set with Eddy Davis & His New Orleans Jazz Band. Sets at 8:45 and 10:45 P.M. $50 ($25 for Davis's late, Woody-free set); no minimum. *Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600).*

Don't Tell Mama—What better way to wind down after an evening of overwrought Broadway fare than with some understated cabaret? Saturdays through 5/30: Steven Brinberg's "Simply Barbra" fetishizes Brooklyn's most reclusive daughter. 5/3: Georgia Osborne presents "Attack of the Killer Showtunes." $10–$15 cover, two-drink minimum. *343 W. 46th St. (757-0788). $.*

Eighty-Eight's—A West Village venue whose unassuming façade conceals a top-notch little theater within. Saturdays in May, Baby Jane Dexter continues her latest red-hot standards 'n' pop revue "The Real Thing." 4/30–5/1 and 5/3: Australian trio Combo Fiasco offers its polished, wacky, and high-spirited take on the American songbook. $15, with a two-drink minimum. *228 W. 10th St. (924-0088).*

FireBird Café—The theater district's newest post-show snuggery. Through 5/2: Nancy Dussault. Tues.–Thurs., sets at 9 P.M. Fri. and Sat., sets at 9 and 11 P.M. $40 cover; two-drink minimum. *363 W. 46th St. (586-0244).*

Michael's Pub—Julie Wilson's standing-room-only show at the recently relocated boîte has been extended into an open-ended run. Sets at 9 and 11 P.M. $20 cover Tues.–Thurs., $25 cover Fri.–Sat., $15 minimum. *Bill's Gay '90s, 57 E. 54th St. (758-2272).*

Rainbow and Stars—Romance, prewar charm, and wood paneling, hundreds of feet above midtown. 4/28–5/9: *Who's the Boss?* you ask. Tony Danza, of course, back for his second attempt at Rat Pack fabulousness, as he belts out standards and *Pal Joey* faves with gusto only a sitcom vet would be capable of. Tues.–Sat. at 8:30 and 11 P.M.; seating for dinner is at 6:30 P.M. $50 cover. *30 Rockefeller Plaza, 65th floor (632-5000).*

Sardi's—Thursdays through May, comic, singer, dancer, and pianist Mark Nadler performs numbers from his 3,000-song repertoire of standards, show tunes, and other theater-district fare ($15 cover). Fridays, John Malino's combo plays jazz standards (no cover). $12 minimum. *234 W. 44th St. (221-8444).*

Spy Bar—Every Sunday night, this scarily trendy SoHo snuggery hosts "Flick6ix," whose drag-king and -queen hosts show campy films and stage appropriately themed live entertainment. Recent nights have included the Michael Caine fêting "Beware the Ides of Mike," a "Triple-RRR" soft-porn night, and the self-explanatory "Date With Dino." $5 cover. *101 Greene St. (343-9000).*

Bars

Oyster Bar—4/30, Grand Central's homey wood taproom hosts the National Multiple Sclerosis Society's $180-per-head after-work cocktail shindig for young professionals. Slurp bivalves, sip champagne (or slurp that, too, for all we care), down some Brooklyn Lager—then get a tour of the newly renovated parts of the train station. Of course, you could save your money and actually take a train somewhere. (For benefit tickets, call 463-7787, ext. 3011.) *Grand Central Station, 42nd St. and Vanderbilt Ave., lower level (490-6653).*

in concert

The Philadelphia Orchestra at Carnegie Hall

Classical Music

Tuesday, April 28

Philadelphia Orchestra—Performs Barber, Britten, and Beethoven. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $18–$75.*

Cygnus Ensemble—Performs works by Schoenberg, Randy Woolf, David Lang, Akemi Naito, and others. *Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330), at 8; $10–$15.*

Wednesday, April 29

Jee-Young Shin, Piano—Performs Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt, and Ravel. *Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330), at 8; $16.*

Thursday, April 30

New York Philharmonic—Performs Elliott Carter's *Elegy*, Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder*, and Suk's Symphony No. 2, "Asrael"; with Dmitri Hvorotovsky, baritone; Leonard Slatkin, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (875-5000), at 8; $20–$75.*

Anne-Sophie Mutter, Violin—Performs Beethoven sonatas with Lambert Orkis, piano. *Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $18–$70.*

Interpretations—Ursula Oppens, piano, performs Ushio Torikal. *Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330), at 8; $10.*

Bargemusic—Trio performances of Saint-Saëns, Stravinsky, and Beethoven. *Fulton Ferry Landing, under the Brooklyn Bridge, Brooklyn (718-624-4061), at 7:30; $20–$30.*

Ground Rules:

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public outdoor performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

Friday, May 1

New York Philharmonic—See 4/30.

Saturday, May 2

New York Philharmonic—See 4/30.

Sunday, May 3

Bargemusic—Leonard Slatkin, piano, performs Barber, Gershwin, and others with Mark Peskanov, violin, and Linda Hohenfeld, soprano. *Fulton Ferry Landing, under the Brooklyn Bridge, Brooklyn (718-624-4061), at 4; $20–$30.*

Opera

Kirov Opera—Performs Borodin's *Prince Igor*, 4/30 at 7:30; Prokofiev's *Betrothal in a Monastery*, 5/2 at 12:30; Tchaikovsky's *Mazeppa*, 5/1 at 7:30; and Glinka's *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, 4/28, 4/29, and 5/2 at 7:30. *Metropolitan Opera House, Lincoln Center (362-6000); $25–$200.*

Amato Opera—Performs Puccini's *Tosca*, 5/2 at 7:30 and 5/3 at 2:30. *319 Bowery (228-8200); $20.*

DiCapo Opera—Performs Puccini's *La Rondine*, 5/1–5/3 at 8. *184 E. 76th St. (288-9438); $75.*

Dance

New York City Ballet—Performs 4/28–5/2 at 8, 5/2 at 2, and 5/3 at 3. *New York State Theater, Lincoln Center (870-5570); $15–$68.*

Forever Tango—The classic Argentine form, performed by Luis Bravo. *Walter Kerr Theater, 218 W. 48th St. (239-6200); $30–$65.*

La Tania—Solo flamenco performances with the virtuoso's band, 4/28–5/3. *The Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. (242-0800); evenings, $35; matinees, $30.*

Previews

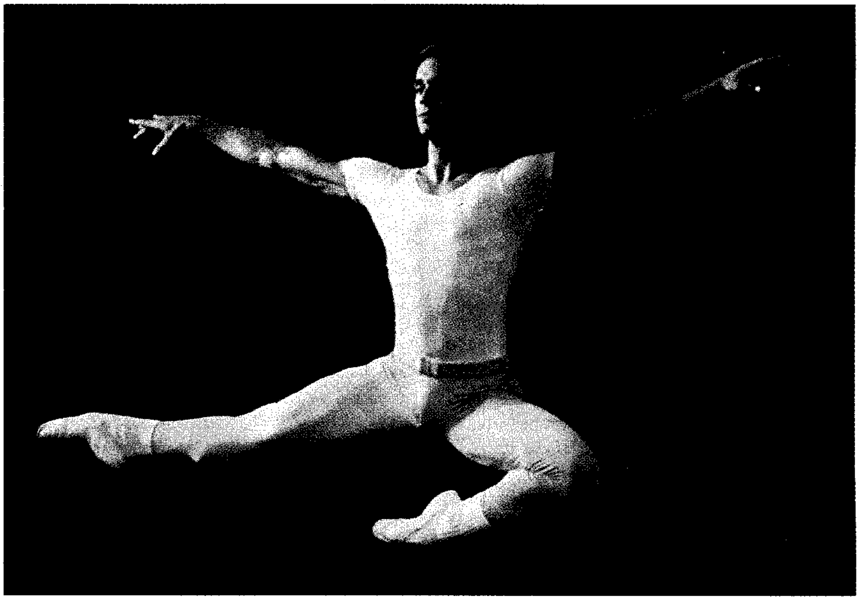
Getting to the Point

In the opening week of the New York City Ballet's season (April 28–June 28) at the New York State Theater, Peter Boal—the most classical of the company's male principals—will star in some half-dozen ballets. To remarkably different works by George Balanchine, Jerome Robbins, and the troupe's current leader, Peter Martins, Boal brings his unique purity of technique and spirit. Rather than using choreography as a vehicle for his own ego, he illuminates the work. Boal describes predecessors he admires as "subtle, not splashy" and cherishes onstage moments in which he feels that he's "dancing in a room alone."

When the curtain comes down, Boal heads home to his family—wife Kelly Cass, a former NYCB soloist, and their sons, Sebastian (2½) and Oliver (6 months). Next day, he's up before seven for what he calls his day job—teaching twelve classes a week at the NYCB-affiliated School of American Ballet. At the unusually early age of 32, he has inherited the primary responsibility for training the next generation's male dancers. In his teaching, he says, he hopes to transmit the principles of his own mentors: Richard Rapp, "who gave us solid, painful technique, with no romanticizing and no cheating," and the late, celebrated Stanley Williams, "who wanted you to create the musical phrase through your movement, rather than simply reacting to the score."

Having begun dancing at the age of 9 and performing soon after (he was the most elegant of child princes), Boal envisions retirement from the stage at around 40, dovetailed with an increased commitment as an instructor.

Tobi Tobias



Photograph by Paul Kolnik.

the mix

Index on Censorship . . . Speak Fiction & Poetry

John Leonard's TV Notes

Suicide Bombers: Secrets of the Shaheed (4/28; 8 to 9 P.M.; Cinemax) talks to Hamas and Hezbollah terrorists who are in Israeli prisons because they failed in their mission to blow up themselves and a bus or an open-air market or a pedestrian mall. It's a refresher course in the rhetoric of holy martyrdom and the banality of evil that doesn't neglect the historical context of genuine grievance and dispossession. We also, and I don't know how, go on Hamas recruitment trips, look at the videotapes of the swearing-in ceremonies, see the Israelis explode the houses of the relatives of suspects, think about Shiites and soccer and Christianity's own martyrology, and are filled with a blank uneasiness that is itself proximate to terror.

Still Holding On: The Legend of Cadillac Jack (4/28; 9 to 11 P.M.; CBS) stars country singer Clint Black and his real-life wife, Lisa Hartman Black, in a docudramatic rendering of the frame-up of rodeo champion Jack Favor on a murder charge, the political corruption that sent him to a Louisiana prison and a chain gang, how he survived, and how his wife and a new lawyer finally got him out. By the numbers, with some bulldogging and a brave prison newspaper editor, but Black has a genuine, offbeat presence, a Paul Simon sort of awkward charm.

Lou Reed: Rock and Roll Heart (4/29; 10 to 11 P.M.; Channel 13) is an American Masters installment almost as cryogenic-cool as its Velvet Underground subject, with performance clips that go back all the way to his college days at Syracuse ("We were so bad we had to change our name every week"), where Delmore Schwartz was his teacher; lots of stuff from the Andy Warhol Factory days and the nights upstairs at Max's Kansas City; pointed remarks by everybody from Patti Smith, Philip Glass, Suzanne Vega, David Bowie, Jim Carroll, David Byrne, and Holly Woodlawn to James Atlas (with a bow tie) and Vaclav Havel (without a tie at all). Reed comments on himself as if looking through a Hubble telescope at a black hole—"I was serious about it; I was also really stoned"—and also mentions that he finally made it in the eighties to an AA meeting. Not that any such meeting would ever make him safe for radio. "Sex With Your Parents" is still banned. A terrific hour with one of the last New York originals.

The Great Egyptians II (5/3; 8 to 11 P.M.; Learning Channel) sends best-selling Egyptologist Bob Brier back into the temples and the tombs, after he explained last time how Tutankhamen got himself murdered. This time, he has unfriendly things to say about the Syrian-bashing Ramses the Great, who may have allowed his first-born to die rather than let Moses and his people go; about Akhenaten, perhaps a premature monotheist; and about Hatshepsut, probably the first cross-dresser ever to become a pharaoh. Contentious and invigorating and a lot less dangerous these days than seeing for yourself.

The Long Island Incident (5/3; 9 to 11 P.M.; NBC) stars a marvelous Laurie Metcalf in the true story of Carolyn McCarthy, the housewife-nurse who got herself elected to Congress on a gun-control platform, in spite of her pro-choice and anti-death-penalty convictions, after her husband was murdered and her son paralyzed by Colin Ferguson in a commuter car on the Long Island Railroad. This is the highest form of agitprop, and the fact that a major network puts it on during sweeps suggests that maybe at last the NRA is on the run. The gun lobby is certainly treated here with the contempt it deserves.

Labor of Love (5/4; 9 to 11 P.M.; Lifetime) may not be *Angels in America*, but it does feature two veterans of Tony Kushner's play, Marcia Gay Harden and David Marshall Grant, in a risky sort of whimsy by Nina Shengold in which Harden, with her biological clock ticking, decides to have a baby the old-fashioned way with Grant, a good friend/art teacher who happens to be gay, and then isn't sure whether the child she's pregnant with is his or that of one-night stand/visiting-from-Bosnia journalist-hunk Daniel Hugh Kelly, but anyway . . . This begins with a yuppie self-infatuation that's almost intolerable, but gets stronger every ten minutes until we actually like these people as much for their flaws as for their aspirations. Grant gets most of the best lines ("Wanna dive into my gene pool?"; "organic farming"; "all my old incest panic . . ."), while Harden breaks the heart and mends it.

In Print
The Parent Trip

"The irrevocable moment in becoming a parent is not the moment you conceive a child; it's the moment you conceive of her," *Harper's* senior editor Barbara Jones writes in *Wanting a Child: Twenty-two Writers on Their Difficult but Mostly Successful Quests for Parenthood in a High-Tech Age.* "Maybe she is coffee brown and Peruvian; you are albumen white and Swedish. Maybe she is a he. But . . . nothing can stop you from wanting her." (Jones's adopted baby turned out to look like a Chinese Winston Churchill, "powerfully irritated—as if someone had just taken away her cigar.") The contributors to this vibrant collection—Tama Janowitz, Phillip Lopate, and Amy Hempel among them—share not only a yearning for parenthood but an unsentimentally enchanting gift for expressing it. (Edited by Jill Bialosky and Helen Schulman; Farrar, Straus and Giroux; $24.)

WANTING
A CHILD

TWENTY-TWO WRITERS
ON THEIR DIFFICULT
BUT MOSTLY SUCCESSFUL QUESTS
FOR PARENTHOOD
IN A HIGH-TECH AGE

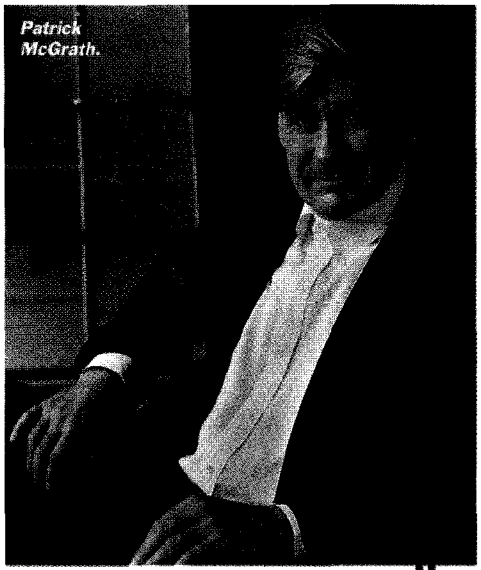
Radio Highlights

New York and Company—Weekdays at noon. 4/27: Paul Cody on *So Far Gone;* Marie Winn on *Red Tails in Love;* Charles Siebert on *Wickerby*. 4/28: Peter Coyote on *Sleeping Where I Fall;* Howard Zinn on *The Zinn Reader;* Esther Yau on the cinema series "Dawn." 4/29: Daniel Petrocelli on the O.J. trial and *Triumph of Justice;* Martha Cooley on *The Archivist;* Cynthia Saltzman on *Portrait of Dr. Gachet;* Linda Bastianich and Susan Oliveria on *The Strang Cookbook*. 4/30: Jazz great Johnny Griffin; Liz Tilberis on *No Time to Die;* actors Geraldine McEwan and Richard Briers on the new production of *The Chairs*. 5/1: Pat Schroeder on *24 Years of House Work . . . and the Place Is Still a Mess;* Gloria Naylor on *The Men of Brewster Place*. WNYC, 820 AM.

The Written Word

Margot Gayle—4/30 at noon: Reading from *James Bogardus and Cast Iron* at the Municipal Art Society's Urban Center Books, 457 Madison Ave., bet. 50th and 51st Sts. (935-3960); free.

Speak Fiction & Poetry!—4/30 at 8: A reading to celebrate *Bomb's* collection of interviews with writers. Tishman Auditorium, New School for Social Research, 66 W. 12th St.; $5.


Patrick McGrath.

Francine Prose.

Happening 'Da Bomb

It's not quite George Plimpton's 'Paris Review' "Writers at Work" series, but then it's not quite trying to be: 'Speak Fiction & Poetry!,' the idiosyncratic best of 'Bomb' magazine's interviews with writers, is just out from G+B Arts International; Deborah Eisenberg, Peter Carey, A. M. Homes, Caryl Phillips, Patrick McGrath, and Francine Prose celebrate the publication with an evening of readings on April 30. (See listings.)

"Wanting a Child"—5/6 at 7:30: Writers Jill Bialosky, Helen Schulman, Barbara Jones, and Amy Hempel on the difficult quest for parenthood in a high-tech age. Barnes & Noble, 2289 Broadway, at 82nd St. (362-8835); free.

Ruth Reichl—5/6 at 7 P.M.: The New York *Times* restaurant critic will discuss the finer points of food writing and her memoir *Tender at the Bone.* Barnes & Noble, 1972 Broadway, at 66th St. (595-6859); free.

"Discovery: *The Nation* 1997 Contest Winners"—5/4 at 8:15 P.M.: Poets Gabriel Gudding, John Poch, Yerra Sugarman, and Martin Walls reading at the Unterberg Poetry Center, 92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100); $10.

Gary N. Van Wyk—4/29 at 5:30 P.M.: The author examines the dynamic, colorful geometric murals of the Bathoso women in *African Painted Houses: Bathoso Dwellings of Southern Africa.* The Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, 18 W. 86th St. (501-3011); $17.

Michael Lowenthal and Elissa Schappell—5/3 at 7 P.M.: Reading from *The Same Embrace* and *Novice Bitch,* respectively. KGB, 85 E. 4th St. (358-1935); free.

"An Evening of Eugene O'Neill"—5/4 at 6:30 P.M.: With Barnard Hughes and Helen Stenborg. NYPL, 40 Lincoln Center Plaza (870-1630); free.

Alison Tyler—4/28 at 7: Reading from her new novel, *The Silver Key.* A Different Light, 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850); free.

Susan Wheeler—4/28 at 7:30: Reading from *Smokes,* her second book of poems. Barnes & Noble Astor Place, 4 Astor Place (420-0816); free.

Lectures and Panels

Sidney Blumenthal—5/4 at 6: The special adviser to President Clinton will speak on "Democracy in Crisis." Tishman Auditorium, World Policy Institute, The New School, 66 W. 12th St. (229-5808, ext. 101); free, reservations strongly recommended.

***Index on Censorship* Presents: Hate Speech, Censorship, and Ideas about Democracy**—5/4 at 7: With Elizabeth Coleman, Nat Hentoff, Victor A. Kovner, Aryeh Neier, Kendall Thomas, and Ursula Owen. Swayduck Auditorium of the New School for Social Research, 65 Fifth Ave., bet. 13th and 14th Sts.; free.

"The Poet Engages History"—5/1 at 7 P.M.: With poets Paul Metcalf, Wang Ping, and U Sam Oeur and translator Ken McCullough. Moderated by Coffee House Press founder Allan Kornblum. Poets House, 72 Spring St. (431-7920); $8.

"Your Manuscript: Through the Publisher's Eyes"—5/2 at 4 P.M.: Editor and publisher Allan Kornblum leads a discussion on the publication process. Poets House, 72 Spring St. (431-7920); $35.

"Artists and Greenwich Village: Continuities in Community and Creativity"—5/5 at 6 P.M.: A panel discussion with Dr. Annette Blaugrund, Avis Berman, and Professor Irving Sandler. The Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave. at (534-1672); $9.

"Victorian Collaboration"—5/1 at 9 A.M.: An all-day conference with William Kelly, Wayne Koestenbaum, and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick. CUNY's Proshansky Auditorium, 33 W. 42 St. (642-2641); free.

"Queer Publics/Queer Privates"—5/1 and 5/2 at 7 P.M.: A two-day conference examining sexual-harassment "law" on U.S. campuses, and the way the category "queer" is constructed in public and private arenas. NYU's Main Building, 100 Washington Sq. E., Room 713 (998-3721); free.

Poetry Writing Workshop With Gertrude Morris—4/30 at 5 P.M.: An opportunity to foster growth in style and form. The New York Public Library's Hudson Park Branch, 66 Leroy St. (243-6876); free.

"Seductive Bodies, Tears of Blood: Modernity, Early Chinese Cinema and Transcultural Imaginations"—4/28 at 7 P.M.: Professor Esther Yau will lecture on the distinctive artistic and critical achievements of early Chinese cinema. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. (423-3587); free with museum admission.

Photographs: left, Marion Ettlinger/Outline; right, David Barry/Outline.

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Memoir Writing Workshop—4/30 at 6 P.M.: Poet Patricia Spears Jones explores the genre, emphasizing tone, narrative control, and issues of confidentiality. The New York Public Library, Harlem Branch, 9 W. 124th St. (348-5620); free, preregistration required.

Panel

"It's not easy to define what hate speech is, nor for a free-expression magazine to suggest the need for censorship," says Ursula Owen, editor of *Index on Censorship*. "But we believe it is a debate we must have in our pages, one of the most important of our time." Which explains the impulse behind the magazine's uncharacteristically self-searching (and characteristically well-stocked) panel, "Hate Speech, Censorship, & Ideas About Democracy." Among the participants: Columbia professor Kendall Thomas, human-rights advocate Aryeh Neier, columnist Nat Hentoff, First Amendment lawyer Victor A. Kovner, and the Anti-Defamation League's Elizabeth Coleman. May 4 at the New School for Social Research. (See listings.)

INDEX
1/98
WHORE
WOG
KIKE
HATE SPEECH
NIGGER
FAGGOT
SPIC

Photograph by Steven Freeman.

Tours

Chinatown—5/3 at 1 P.M.: Visit the largest Chinatown in the Western Hemisphere and explore the Lower East Side's diverse Asian community. Meet at the southwest corner of Canal and Lafayette Sts. (439-1090); $9.

SoHo—5/8 at 12:30: Explore this neighborhood collection of cast-iron buildings built during the second half of the nineteenth century, when the heart of New York City moved uptown. Architectural historian Matthew Postal is your guide on this Municipal Art Society tour. Meet at the Canal Street post office on the southwest corner of Canal and Church Sts. (call 935-3960 for further information). $10.

Hudson Square/St. John's Square—5/9 at 1: Stroll through these charming little communities, tracing their development from exclusive nineteenth-century enclaves to printing and warehouse districts to the chic neighborhoods they are today. Meet at the northwest corner of Broadway and Spring St. (call 935-3960 for further information); $15.

"Remembering May Day"—5/2 at 1 P.M.: Explore the rich history of the East Village. Stops include the Labor Lyceum and sites associated with Margaret Sanger and Daniel Tompkins. Meet at the black cube at Astor Place (439-1090); $9.

A Walk Through Radical Old New York—5/2 at 2:30: Visiting "many points of freedom and destiny," including Emma Goldman's House, Astor Place, and Mayor LaGuardia's first house. Meet at the Peace Building, 339 Lafayette St. (718-264-3021); voluntary contribution requested.

Art From Ancient Chinese Tombs—Tuesdays at noon, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Sundays at 4 P.M.: A museum tour concentrating on the range of objects discovered in Chinese tombs on recent archaeological digs. Meet at the information desk in the main rotunda of the Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. Call 423-3500 to confirm the day and time of the tour; the schedule is subject to change.

"The Central Park You Never Knew"—5/2 and 5/3 at 3 P.M.: Explore New York's collective backyard and discover the park's early history. Call 465-3331 for meeting place and reservations; $12.

"The Streets Where We Lived"—Saturdays and Sundays at 1:30 and 2:30 P.M.: A regular walking tour inviting visitors to stroll the Lower East Side and discover how different immigrant groups shaped the city. Lower East Side Tenement Museum, 90 Orchard St. (431-0233); $8.

The Jewish Lower East Side—5/3 at 1 P.M.: A tour of 150 years of Jewish settlement in the area. Stops include the Eldridge Street Synagogue and the *Jewish Daily Forward* building. Meet at Straus Square, at the intersection of Canal and Essex Sts. with E. Broadway (242-5762); $12.

Metropolitan Opera Backstage—Weekdays from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.: A unique, behind-the-scenes view of the creation of the opera. Includes costume and set design, the performers' rehearsal facilities and dressing rooms, and the opulent auditorium. At Lincoln Center; call for reservations and times (769-7020); $8.

Exhibitions

"America's Concentration Camps: Remembering the Japanese-American Experience"—Through 1/5/99: An exhibition that tells the story of this shameful chapter in American history through the eyes of the incarcerated. Photographs, mementos, and home videos contributed by some of the 120,313 people held in the camps—two thirds of whom were American citizens—will be on display, along with maps and statistics from each camp. Ellis Island Immigration Museum, New York Harbor (363-3200); $5.

"Landmarks of New York"—Through 8/23: An exhibition of photographs by Barbaralee Diamonstein, coinciding with the release of *Landmarks of New York III*, which documents more than 1,000 historic sites. The New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St. (873-3400); $5.

Sixth Annual Poetry Publication Showcase—Through 5/9: An exhibit celebrating National Poetry Month. Poets House, 72 Spring St. (431-7920); free.

Bridging New York—Through 6/28: Selections from the museum's painting, print, and photographic collections dealing with the city's bridges. The Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (534-1672); $5 suggested contribution.

"Proudly We Served"—Through 9/5: Photographs, artifacts, and models commemorating 200 years of service by African-American veterans. Intrepid Sea Air Space Museum, Pier 86, W. 46th St. (957-7055); $10.

New York From Above: An Aerial View—Through 6/14: An exhibit of 26 paintings by contemporary artist and geographer Spelman Evans Downer that chart the evolution of Greater Gotham over the past 100 years. His work depicts historical landscapes before extensive urbanization and also includes space-age satellite views of Manhattan. The Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (534-1672); $5 suggested contribution.

"A Float for All Seasons: New York's Ethnic Parades"—Through 1/10/99: Mini-floats, paraphernalia, and photographs celebrating cultural identity in New York. City Partners Gallery at the Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (534-1672); $5 suggested contribution.

"Broadway! The Great White Way in 1898"—Through 6/28: The show features stars, costumes, and a set of models reflecting Broadway 100 years ago. The Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (534-1672); $5.

"The New Metropolis: New York, 1898–1998"—Through 12/1: A yearlong exhibition commemorating the consolidation of the five boroughs. The Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (534-1672); $5.

Events

NY Cares "Spring Cleaning"—5/2 at 9 A.M.: 3,200 volunteers are sought to clean parks, plant trees and flowers, paint park benches, and repair fences and playground equipment. To participate, call 598-5800. Central Park, East River Park, Prospect Park, Pelham Bay Park, and more. A thank-you party will be held at Hamilton Fish Recreation Center at 128 Pitt St.

Online

***New York* Magazine on the Web**—Click with direction by following the links in "Stephanie's Surf Report" (in the "Today" section of www.newyorkmag.com), where you'll find a new Website reviewed every weekday. This week: See how Urban Desires drops the *'zine* from its name; learn the best way to invest at MoneyMinded; go global with an online community; answer the difficult question "Do you want . . . ?"; and create your own cyber cookbook with the Recipe Guys. And don't forget to stick around www.nymag.com to take advantage of all the other stuff we offer, like Web exclusives—including a daily trivia question, daily picks of New York events in "Vanessa Takes Manhattan," and a new Subscriber Service Center—plus selected articles from the current issue, archives of your favorite critics, and a searchable "Cue" section. So surf us, already.

GAME WEEK

HOME ▨ AWAY ▨

	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
METS		HOU FSNY 7:30PM	HOU FSNY 6:30PM	COL WOR TBA	COL WOR TBA	COL FSNY 1PM	COL FSNY 1PM
YANKEES	TOR MSG 7PM	TOR MSG 7PM	SA MSG 7PM	SA WPIX 7PM	KC MSG 7:30PM	KC MSG 7:30PM	KC MSG 1:30PM
METROSTARS							TB UNI 3PM
	4/27	4/28	4/29	4/30	5/1	5/2	5/3

kids

Huck Finn...Earthly Delights

Ground Rules:

◍ = free

● = now or never (one-shot deal or final week)

Children's Events

The Wizard of Oz—Sixteen-year-old Jessica Grové from Columbus, Ohio, follows the Yellow Brick Road as Dorothy in a 90-minute megaproduction incorporating songs from the 1939 movie. Mickey Rooney is cast as the Wizard, and Eartha Kitt is the Wicked Witch of the West—replacing Roseanne, who played the part last year. 5/1 through 5/31. **THEATRE AT MADISON SQUARE GARDEN,** 2 Penn Plaza (307-4111, or visit the Website at www.oztour.com); $19–$49.

Down the Mississippi—*Big River: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,* an adaptation of Mark Twain's literary masterpiece—which won seven Tony awards when it was performed on Broadway in 1985, including for book and lyrics—is performed by **NEW YORK YOUTH THEATER.** The cast and backstage techies range in age from 8 to adult. Through 5/31. Thurs. and Fri. at 7, Sat. at 2 and 7, and Sun. at 3. Greenwich Street Theatre, 547 Greenwich St. (two blocks west of Varick and two blocks south of Houston; 242-2822). General admission is $12, $10 by advance payment.

Natural Order—Stretch like a cat in a free Family Tai Chi workshop in one of Central Park's most beautiful settings. 5/2 from 11 to noon. **THE CHARLES A. DANA DISCOVERY CENTER,** 110th St. nr. Fifth Ave. (860-1370).◍●

Inventive Humor—Professor Putter mixes magic with science to make his notorious gizmo-inventions. His latest, the Hollerometer, still seems to need some audience testing. 5/2 and 5/3 at 2. **CAROLINES KIDS KLUB,** 1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (757-4100). Tickets are $10; reservations required.●

Sheepish—The shearing itself goes on during most of Saturday at **QUEENS WILDLIFE CENTER**'s annual Sheep-Shearing Weekend. All weekend long, spinners demonstrate their craft, and kids can join in with hat-making and lamb-puppet construction. 5/2 and 5/3 from 11 to 5. 53-51 111th St., Flushing Meadows Corona Park (271-1500). Admission is $2.50, $1.25 for seniors, and 50 cents for children ages 3 to 12.

Spiritual Movement—In the third installment of the "Story-Telling Through Dance" series, a couple of brightly costumed dancers demonstrate the rhythmic and brilliantly fast North Indian Kathak dance style—originally a form of worship in Hindu Temples. 5/3 at 3. **LOTUS FINE ARTS CENTER,** 109 W. 27th St. (627-1076). Admission is $10, $7 for seniors and children.●

Beyond Circus—At **CIRQUE DU SOLEIL**'s idiosyncratic *Quidam,* an artsy circus mostly for grown-up audiences, both champagne and cotton candy are sold during intermission. Battery Park City. Through 6/14. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. at 6 and 9:30, Sat. at 4:30 and 8:30, and Sun. at 1 and 5; call 800-678-5440. Tickets are $31.50–$59.50 for adults, $15.71–$41.75 for children (tax is included in ticket price).

Preview—Alison McHaffie's *Manhattan Is a Fishtank* and Brian Selznick's *The Wild Queen* are among about a dozen new puppet shows in various stages of completion that will be performed throughout the church and garden at an **ART'S AT ST. ANN'S** open house, 5/2 from noon to 6. Corner of Clinton and Montague Sts., Brooklyn Heights (718-858-2424). Admission is free, though donations are "graciously accepted."

All's Fair—*Meadowfair,* a Staten Island institution now in its twenty-first year, takes place on Snug Harbor Cultural Center's East Meadow, in front of the **STATEN ISLAND CHILDREN'S MUSEUM.** This year, a horse theme will mean pony rides, horse grooming, and jumping demonstrations. Kids can make hobby horses and jousting shields, decorate horse shoes, and fashion clay horses. A free shuttle bus provides transportation from numerous parking lots near the site that will be made available for the occasion (718-273-2060, ext. 121), 5/3 from noon to 5. Admission is $8 per child, which includes five activity tickets, $5 for adults.

Self-worth—Robert Brooks, author of "The Self-Esteem Teacher," gives a talk called "Raising Resilient Children: Strategies for Fostering Self-Esteem, Motivation and Hope." The presentation is part of a series sponsored by the Churchill School and Center for Learning Disabilities—and in addition to general concerns will specifically address esteem issues for kids with learning difficulties. 4/29 at 8 P.M. York Preparatory School, 40 W. 68th St. (226 0612); $30 per family for all or part of the series.●

Bag It—The Paper Bag Players, a funny, funky, free-associating group of children's performers whose reputation precedes them, stage their latest and greatest: *The Big Sleepover,* 5/2 from 3 to 4. **ARTSCONNECTION CENTER,** 120 W. 46th St. (302-7433, ext. 1440); $6.●

Going Through Changes—Part of the **WALTER READE THEATER**'s "Pack Your Bags" series, *Imuhar: A Legend* tells the story of Khenan, whose mother's death requires him to leave Paris and join his father's Imuhar tribe in the deserts of Niger. French with English subtitles. 5/2 and 5/3 at 2. Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level; $3.●

Breathe Easier—Physicians at the **BROOKLYN CHILDREN'S MUSEUM** will screen children, where desired, at the launch of the museum's Asthma/Allergy Awareness Month. Interactive displays and speakers will disseminate current information about prevention and treatment. 5/2 from 10 to 3, 5/3 from 10 to 2. 145 Brooklyn Ave., at St. Mark's Ave. (718-735-4402).◍●

Slam Dance—In *Basketball Jones,* Peter Pucci Plus Dancers make their own percussive sounds with ten bouncing basketballs. *Hoop-La* calls for 50 hula hoops and six dancers. 5/1 through 5/3. **NEW VICTORY THEATER,** 209 W. 42nd St. (239-2600); $10.●

Opening New Growth

"In a public place like this, children want to find their own secret paths," says Catherine Eberbach, manager of exhibits and programs at the New York Botanical Garden, "but they also want to keep their parents in full view at all times." On May 2, the Everett Children's Adventure Garden opens with two mazes, one among low bushes, another weaving around boulders—offering plenty of opportunities for children to guide themselves without losing sight of the adults who brought them. The floral equivalent of a petting zoo, the $7 million Everett Garden is the first environment of its kind in the country. At this time of year, kids can scoop cylinders of goop from a pond and examine it, tadpoles and all, under a hand lens. They can embark on scavenger hunts that encourage them to notice subtle differences between plants, and learn how to press and mount specimens for further study. "We've tried hard to find a balance between letting children touch what's growing here and at the same time respecting the ecology," says Eberbach, who concedes that a fair amount of replanting will have to be done on an ongoing basis. The idea of dedicating not just programs but also twelve acres of land to educational child's play arose, she says, out of some serious institutional soul-searching. "We're very happy to be thought of as a pretty place," she says, but there was an urgency about taking on "a larger mission in the lives of families as well." Showing kids how much fun can be had in a garden is all part of that. If they tire of weaving birds' nests, Eberbach suspects, stepping onto rubber water lilies to send water spurting out of a pond will still hold a thrill. "When the contractors keep playing with something, you know you've got a hit."

BARBARA ENSOR

Photograph by John Ferrentino.

Cue

Brian Parks
Editor

Barbara Ensor
Kids

Patricia Falvo
Movies

Brian Farnham
Sports

Vanessa Grigoriadis
In Concert

Linda Hall
Books
Events
Radio

John Leonard
Television

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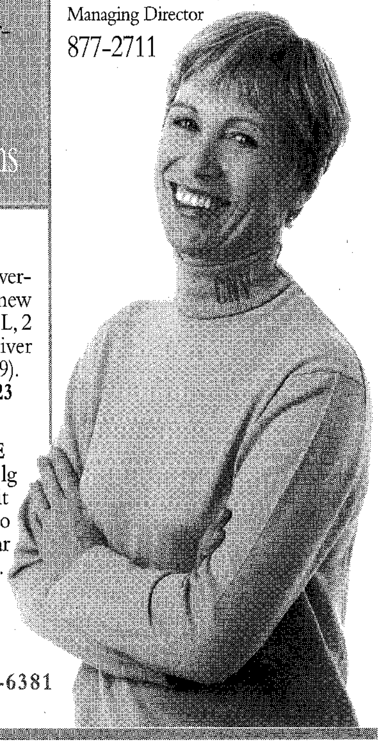

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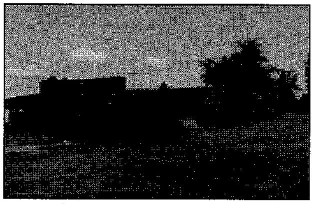

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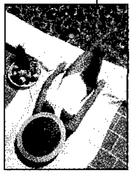

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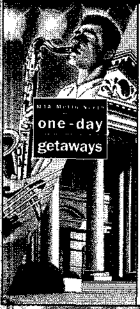

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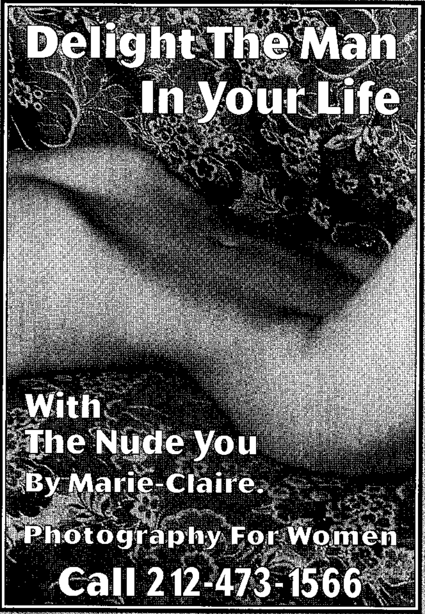

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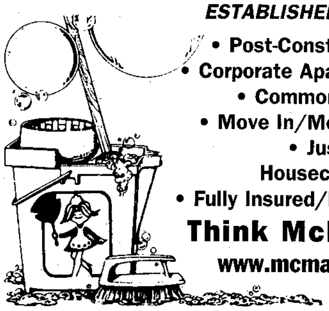

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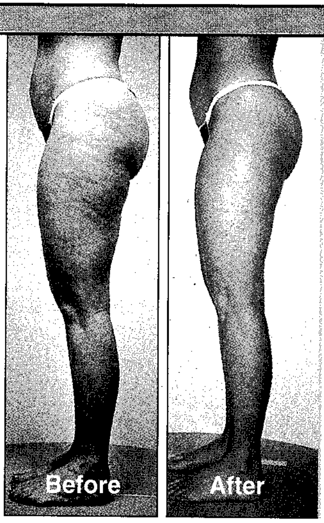

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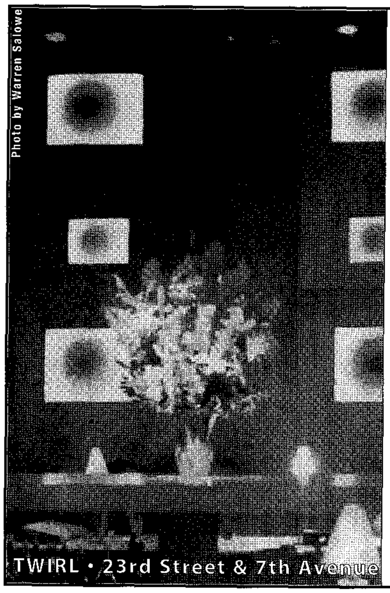

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AGAINST CANCER

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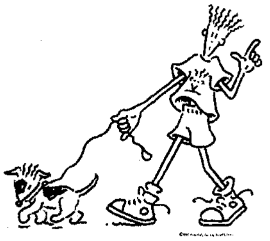

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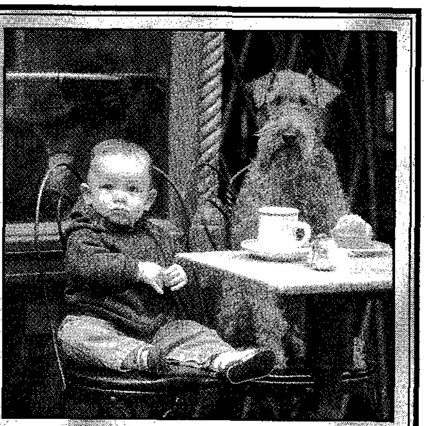

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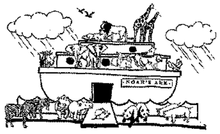

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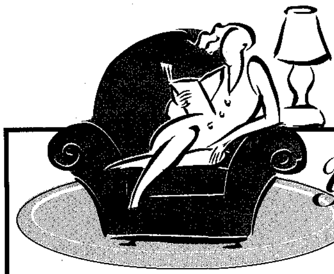

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Colorado Bound?—Absolutely darling, white Jewish female - 39, 5'7", exec who lives in Denver, condo in Vail - slim, long legs. If you're good-looking, successful, 38-48, coming to Denver on business/skiing, call! I'm worth the trip. 3419 ✉ ☎

Gay White Man—Mid 40s, 6', 165 lbs, well-toned, hazel eyes, dark blond hair, financial professional with an independent life style, active fund raiser who enjoys the arts, travel, bridge and entertaining. Seeks 35-plus, good-looking, successful professional who is warm, emotionally available and integrated in mind, body and spirit. Seeking committed relationship. No smoking/drugs. Note/photo/phone. 3393 ✉ ☎

Seeking A Truly Exceptional Woman—Very handsome, single white male, 41, tall, great build, nonsmoker, never been married, very wealthy, generous and particular, would like a quality relationship with an extremely beautiful, single white female (21-33) with brains, a great body and athletic interests, for fine dining, travel to exotic islands, scuba, boating, *tennis, romantic evenings and mutual* spoiling. Recent photo and description a must (will exchange). 3407 ✉

Black Coffee - No Sugar, No Cream—Attractive, well-educated, 34-year-old, 5'6", black financial professional woman seeks successful, single professional male (25-40) who enjoys life, sports, travel and the X-Files. Let's get together for dinner, theater, movies and romance. Recent photo, note and phone, please. 3429 ✉

Affectionate Corporate Lawyer—49, divorced, 6'3", partner in NYC firm, lives in Westchester. Enjoys reading, golf, Broadway, Carnegie Hall, NY Jets, and owns small sailboat. Would like to meet a tall, available, white, Christian woman, 25-40, who, like him, is intelligent, honest, bright, *mature, warm, and a college graduate with* a good sense of humor. Please include a recent photo with your note. 3428 ✉

Gorgeous, Bright, Catholic—This great-looking, well-educated, never-married, late 30s, slender and sexy blond is seeking true male counterpart for marriage, family, travel and adventure. Even though I like some of the finer things, I'm a down-to-earth, warm and caring woman who main*tains traditional values with a modern out*look. My interests include dancing, dining, movies, cultural activities, among many others. I appreciate a great sense of humor, pride, emotional intimacy and respect a man's individuality. I'm seeking a very intelligent, well-educated (advanced professional degree), white, Catholic or Christian man who is never-married, divorced or widowed, with no children as yet. Please be 34-48ish, a nonsmoker, upbeat, tall, romantic and attractive. NY, NJ, CT. Note/recent photo. 3443 ✉

Reliable—Handsome, wry, down-to-earth, Ivy, in the arts, (212), young, fit 49, 5'11", reflective, kind, informal. Loves books, nature, music, good talk. Seeks warm, bright, gentle Manhattan woman, 30s-40s, with depth of spirit, matching good looks and heart, for just the very real thing. Hugs too. Recent photo/note of substance (no form letters), please. 3439 ✉

Voluptuous, Young Candice Bergen—Almost: long blond-brown hair, blue eyes, 5'6", Jewish, financial recruiter. Loves art (I paint in oils), theater, music, tennis (I'm getting better), working out ...and I love animals. Seeks intelligent, successful male, approximately 45-55, with a strong character and a good sense of humor. Note/photo/phone. 3418 ✉

Seeking Classy Lady Of Color—All shades of brown, mocha, white, yellow and chocolate are welcome. A Woman whose intelligence is as alluring as her beauty! Single, white, successful entrepreneur, college-educated, with GQ looks and sexy hard body, 6'1", 195 lbs, 43, seeking a lady with class, style, sophistication, substance and character. A Woman who is emotionally available, with a loving heart, for a long-term commitment. Please be 27-40 years, nonsmoker and fit. We enjoy fine dining, working out, dancing, jazz, traveling and possess an infectious passion for living. Letter/photo essential. 3337 ✉ ☎

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Good Guys Are Hard To Find—Handsome, brown-haired, blue-eyed, tall, fit, successful, 44, romantic, seeking 30-something, pretty, kind, bright, affectionate soul mate. Photo. 3364 ✉

Ordinary Man...Extraordinary Dream—Attractive, unpretentious, single white man, 48, seeks sincere, commitment-minded female for friendship, love and marriage. Note/phone, please. 3445 ✉

Non-Hamptonite—Attended church, ran marathons, traveled Third World, made sushi. Beautiful, petite brunette, 42, seeks male, 38-50, with balanced self-esteem and many interests. Ready for serious friendship/romance. Note/photo. 3375 ✉

Are You In Los Angeles?—Bicoastal film director - attractive, fit, funny, 45, seeks warm, smart, self-assured man capable of great dignity, conversation and silliness, for theater, music and fun in LA while plotting our many returns to NYC. Children wonderful; cats, cigarettes not so. Letter/photo, please. 3406 ✉ ☎

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Seeking Replacement—For Jerry, Elaine, George and Kramer. Must enjoy muffin tops and Pez. Single Jewish female, 35, yadda, yadda, yadda, seeks Jewish male for yadda, yadda, yadda. Low talkers need not apply. 3292 ✉

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I Am A Single, 35-Year-Old—6', super-fun, very financially secure, great-looking professional guy who enjoys children, working out, reading, discussing current events and all types of cultural activities. *I am looking for a 28-35-year-old, witty,* beautiful, eloquent professional woman with a great sense of humor, who enjoys sports, excellent restaurants, traveling and weekends in the Hamptons. If you are looking for a stable, sincere, total gentleman who truly is one in a million, please send note/phone. 3360 ✉

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A Good Catch Seeks Same—Handsome Jewish male, 35, 5'10", athletic, prominent law partner, Ivy undergrad and grad. Have balanced success, both professionally and personally, with good priorities and values. Fun and serious. Responsible and spontaneous. Warm, romantic, thoughtful and a good friend. I enjoy the so-called finer things in life (theater, concerts, travel, dining out), and equally the most simple things (cooking in, walks in Central Park and a good workout). Am looking for one special Jewish woman, 28-36, who is super-bright, highly accomplished (MD, MBA/CEO, JD), sweet, caring, passionate about both her professional and personal lives, mature, very attractive inside and out, a nonsmoker, and who herself, too, proves that all of the above can coexist and live happily in the same person. Descriptive note/phone. Photo optional. Or e-mail: GoodCatch4@aol.com. 3326 ✉ ☎

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Successful, Creative Professional—Man of wit and passion, handsome, warm, cultivated, lover of the arts. Seeks woman of complex beauties, 32-38. Photo. 3438 ✉

Truly Stunning Actress/Entrepreneur—35, 5'2", MBA, is seeking a white male partner in life. Feminine but strong, dreamy but practical, I've worked hard to enjoy my financial freedom, friends and tropical ocean. I hope you also value them. I'm fun, slim, Japanese, nonsmoker, divorced with no kids. If you've made peace with your past/are ready to start a family, please send a note/photo. 3370 ✉

I Missed You—Easygoing guy, 35, Jewish NJ dentist, seeks an aggressive, goal-oriented, Jewish professional female for love. 3394 ✉ ☎

Wanted: Best Friend/Soul Mate—Attractive, secure, fun, Jewish professional man, 37, 5'8", athletic. Many interests. Seeks female. Phone/photo. 3396 ✉

Professional, Attractive—African-American female with verve appeal and playful nuance, seeks male with insight, humor and integrity. Photo. 3412 ✉ ☎

Gay, White, Masculine—46, 5'10", preppy, clean-cut, intelligent - Fulbright scholar, successful writer/designer/entrepreneur, cultured, spiritual - loves books/art/music/ideas. Seeks guy, 28-50, with passion for beauty, life and clean living. Note/photo. POB 843, NYC 10163

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Arts Executive—Bright, beautiful brunette, 5'7", enjoys film, theater, travel, tennis and hiking. Seeks warm, sincere, intelligent, attractive man with wit, late 40s-50s, for friendship and romance. Photo appreciated. 3380 ✉ ☎

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Soulful, Spirited, Attractive—40s woman, Mediterranean background, active life, happy with family, friends and career, seeking 40s-early 50s, fun, warmhearted, optimistic man. Photo appreciated. 3409 ✉

Looking For You—Me: 35, petite, high-energy blond, new to town. I'm an intelligent, educated professional with varied interests which include cultural events, cooking, traveling (domestic and international), walking, reading and movies. You: 35-45, professional, with similar interests and ambition. 3430 ✉

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I Am A Happy And Healthy—38-year-old entertainment entrepreneur living in Manhattan and the Berkshires. I am an avid skier, a pilot, a musician and an incorrigible romantic. I hope to meet a warm, smart, charming, cheerful, adventuresome, attractive woman with a sense of humor. Please send letter and photo. 3425 ✉

NJ Intellectual—59, interested in ideas, especially social issues. Also: nature, tennis, hiking, travel. Fit. Successful businessman, 5'10", looking for very intelligent lady, to age 56. 3440 ✉

Very Attractive—Foreign-born Asian female, 37, 5'5", well-educated, soft, caring, seeks bright, handsome, warm-hearted, happy gentleman, 37-47, for standing together for life. Photo/note. 3437 ✉

Very Pretty Teacher—Fun, 35, Rubenesque, 5'5", seeks professional Jewish man, nonsmoker, for fun - maybe forever. Photo, please. 3431 ✉

Radiant, Very Pretty Mom Of One—Loves outdoors, looking for friendly entrepreneur-type Jewish male, 37-43, who likes Seinfeld. 3421 ✉ ☎

Himalayan Hiker/Commercial Banker—Petite, warm, adventuresome, golfer, skier, spiritual, corporate VP, early 50s, seeks a well-analyzed, athletic, compassionate man with a sense of humor. 3367 ✉

Pretty, Classy, Blue-Eyed Blond—Seeks 45-55, attractive, witty, fun-loving, confident man who enjoys life. Photo/note. 3368 ✉

Pretty Woman—Slender, active, educated, warm, seeks male, 60-75. 3413✉☎

Someday He'll Come Along—The man I love. You can be him if you are attractive, tall, accomplished, affluent, health-conscious, free to travel, fun-loving, 59-65. I'm all of the above, seeking meaningful relationship...for a very stunning and special lady. Photo. 3392 ✉ ☎

Do You Exist?—Very pretty, petite, perky professional, widow, lover of life, sports, arts, especially people...looking for a terrific, handsome, Jewish, traditional guy, 45-60, who is accomplished, financially and emotionally put-together. Photo helpful. 3363 ✉ ☎

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Pretty LI Lady—43, slim, with lots of personality - enjoys theater, music, working out and fine dining. Seeks "happily ever after" with intelligent man who is warmhearted, sincere and friendly, nonsmoker. 3377 ✉

Artist—(Female.) Wildly optimistic. Resourceful, tastefully aging hippy. Looking for searcher, finder, keeper. (Male.) Share photos. 3390 ✉

Girl Next-Door—Single, white Catholic female, 35, financial professional, who is fit, upbeat and attractive and has varied interests, seeks single, professional white Catholic male, 33-38, for friendship/relationship. If this piques your curiosity, please send note/phone. 3374 ✉

Charming, Gay, Slim, Feminine—Blond Wasp, 38, independent Manhattanite, intelligent, passionate, fun, financially secure, culturally sophisticated, seeks same. Photo. 3382 ✉

Tall, Handsome Gentleman—34, MBA/MS, Wall Street professional, originally from India, seeks an attractive, well-educated professional lady, 26-31, nonsmoker, never married, for a caring and meaningful (and fun!) long-term relationship. Race unimportant but note/photo/phone appreciated. 3444 ✉

Happy As The Day Is Long—Upbeat, Jewish, 50-year-old man, trim, athletic and bright, considerate and funny. Enjoys music, cycling, cinema and outdoors. Seeking sincere, pretty, fit, 40-50-year-old soul mate. Prefer photo. 3371 ✉ ☎

Gay—Well-educated, slightly older man, fun to be with, athletic, personable, seeks masculine, healthy man of good character, to age 50. 3400 ✉ ☎

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Handsome, Elegant, Kind, Secure—Seeks slender, educated lady, 50s. Dance, theater, travel... Photo/note. 3420 ✉

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Nice-Looking Man—Professional, warm, youthful, trim, 5'10", 57 - seeks a down-to-earth, stimulating, slender woman for friendship and romance. I love the arts, music, films, travel...or just a good conversation. Photo, please. 3397 ✉

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Want To Have A Child—Fit, attractive female, 39, seeks partner to have a child. Sincere friendship important. Be intelligent, honest, financially secure. 3433 ✉ ☎

Great-Looking, Successful And Fun—35-year-old investment banker, 5'10", very handsome (look like a combination of "Brat Pack" actors Lowe, Cruise, Dillon, etc.), good build - work out, well-bred and educated, Christian, highly successful investment banker with a sense of humor. Seeking female, 26-35, with eclectic interests like the arts, sports, nature and fine dining. Prefer exotic-type look (i.e. black hair, seductive dark eyes), 5'4"- 5'8" and slim a must. 3411 ✉ ☎

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Handsome Jewish Physician—Seeks super-smart, exceptionally attractive lady (yet unpretentious), 35-45 years and a nonsmoker. Send photo. 3423 ✉

Ex-Bartender Turned Tax Attorney—Entrepreneur, Jewish male, 30, with an easy laugh and love of travel, comfortable in tux and T-shirts, seeks coquettish, careerist Jewish female who is non-religious, nonsmoking, warm, caring, independent, confident, attractive - and knows it! Must enjoy dancing and old-fashioned chivalry. Photo/note. 3427 ✉

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Slim, Strong, Attractive—Female Earth Firster! Professional, 55, seeks caring man who loves the wild, 50-65, fit... buddy, friend and mate. 3376 ✉

Run The Risk—Fit, 50s, well-educated, well-traveled, active career. Honest. Love the outdoors, boating, theater, laughter. Seeking similar qualities in a smart, attractive man, 55-69, for friendship/ romance. Note/photo. 3401 ✉

Buxom, Full-Figured—Educated Jewish woman wanted for successful, handsome, giving, caring, middle-aged, active attorney who is handicapped and walks with crutches, for romantic times. Recent photo and phone, please. 3426 ✉

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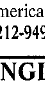

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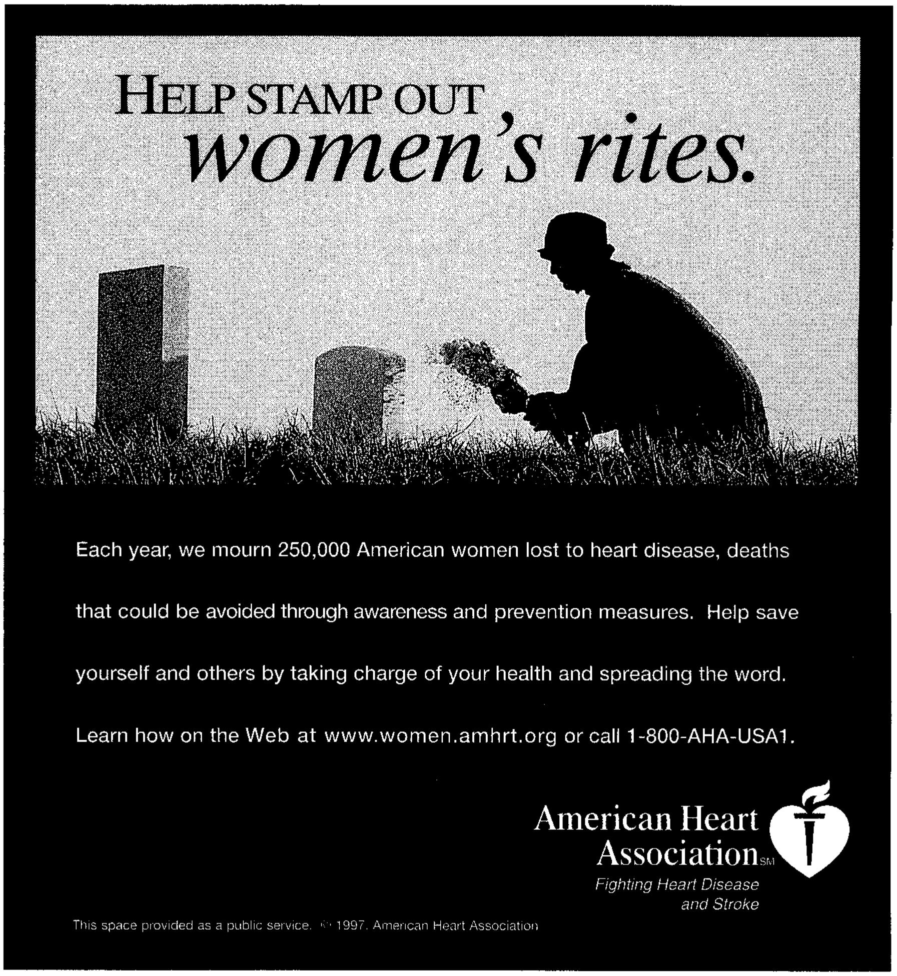

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Solutions to last week's puzzles

M	A	S	C	A	R	A	■	S	W	A	L	L	O	W
O	■	E	■	X	■	T	■	U	■	S	■	A	■	A
D	E	S	U	L	P	H	U	R	■	S	A	M	O	S
E	■	S	■	E	■	O	■	F	■	E	■	E	■	T
M	A	I	L	■	M	U	L	T	I	M	E	D	I	A
■	■	O	■	E	■	S	■	H	■	B	■	O	■	G
■	A	N	G	L	I	A	■	E	C	L	O	G	U	E
■	■	■	■	E	■	N	■	I	■	A	■	■	■	■
F	L	A	C	C	I	D	■	N	I	G	H	T	S	■
A	■	L	■	T	■	A	■	T	■	E	■	O	■	■
B	E	L	L	R	I	N	G	E	R	■	I	M	A	M
E	■	O	■	O	■	D	■	R	■	A	■	B	■	I
R	A	V	E	N	■	O	B	N	O	X	I	O	U	S
G	■	E	■	I	■	N	■	E	■	E	■	L	■	T
E	A	R	A	C	H	E	■	T	U	S	C	A	N	Y

■	A	G	E	D	■	A	V	E	R	■	A	P	A	R	T	■	H	U	G	E
S	I	E	V	E	■	D	A	T	E	■	C	O	L	O	R	■	I	N	A	S
A	R	N	O	S	■	S	L	U	G	G	E	R	S	L	U	G	G	E	R	S
P	E	D	R	O	S	■	■	I	R	E	■	T	O	E	■	O	H	A	R	E
I	D	E	A	L	I	S	M	■	E	S	M	E	■	S	E	A	L	S	■	■
D	E	R	■	A	F	R	O	■	S	T	A	N	D	■	F	L	Y	I	N	G
■	■	B	E	T	T	I	N	G	S	E	T	T	I	N	G	■	W	E	R	E
A	P	E	X	E	S	■	T	R	E	■	U	S	N	A	■	V	I	R	A	L
G	O	N	E	■	■	T	E	A	S	E	R	■	A	N	V	I	L	■	■	■
A	N	D	S	■	O	A	R	S	■	A	E	R	■	■	A	B	Y	S	S	■
R	T	E	■	W	H	O	O	P	I	G	R	O	U	P	I	E	■	U	T	E
■	I	R	W	I	N	■	■	S	S	R	■	S	P	A	N	■	O	P	E	N
■	■	■	I	D	O	L	S	■	R	E	M	I	S	S	■	■	D	E	R	N
E	R	A	S	E	■	A	L	F	A	■	I	N	T	■	A	C	O	R	N	S
R	O	U	E	■	W	H	A	L	E	R	S	S	A	I	L	O	R	S	■	■
E	N	T	R	E	E	■	M	O	L	E	S	■	R	E	I	N	■	N	A	E
■	■	O	M	A	N	I	■	T	I	N	T	■	T	R	A	N	S	O	M	S
A	E	G	I	S	■	N	O	I	■	T	A	S	■	■	S	E	T	O	U	T
T	R	Y	S	T	I	N	G	L	I	S	T	I	N	G	■	C	O	P	S	E
O	G	R	E	■	N	E	L	L	A	■	E	Z	I	O	■	T	R	E	E	S
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New York

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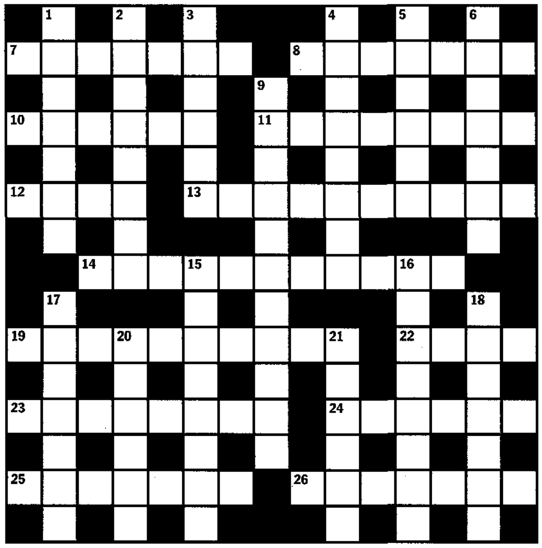
The 'Guardian' Crossword

ACROSS
7 The baseball circuit. (4,3)
8 He can't love, sadly, and is to be sexually unfaithful. (5,2)
10 Tease about record of Mary's husband. (6)
11 You have to put up with the person. (4,4)
12 Simple heart of Father Benedict. (4)
13 Large thing made to fit a square corner. (5,5)
14 Fear of being wrongly partitioned. (11)
19 Wilde's version of "The Lady of the Lake!"? (10)
22 Pickpockets may be lucky. (4)
23 Tolerate a girl in New York. (8)
24 Find company in one churchman or another. (6)
25 Nothing new about her being shown out. (7)
26 Note the winner of a possession order. (7)



DOWN
1 Bogey-man. (7)
2 Recall soldiers and arm. (8)
3 Effusive oil-producer? (6)
4 It may control the oven cooking the roast. (8)
5 Forces servant to be a comic character. (6)
6 The loss-making accommodation for students. (7)
9 Dramatic actress in great need of new parts. (11)
15 Corresponding but never meeting. (8)
16 Regulation I ignored in making guns. (8)
17 Stray U.S. serviceman turns up in female attire. (7)
18 A rugby player, too fat be fit. (7)
20 Out-moded love is destined for failure. (6)
21 Object I've put into the salad. (6)

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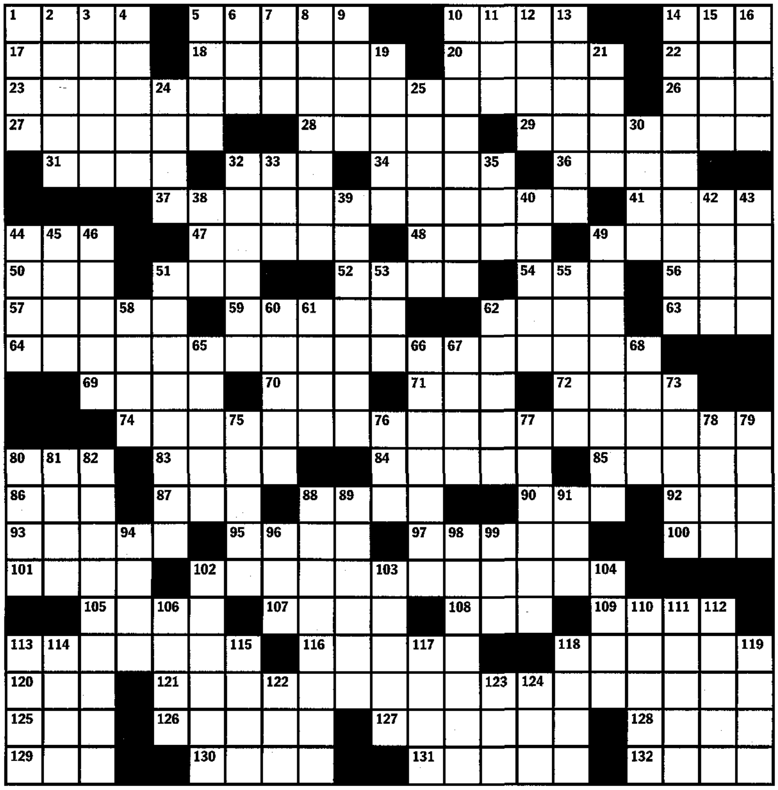
'Questioning': 'Cue' Crossword • By Maura B. Jacobson

ACROSS
1 Month on the Hebrew calendar
5 Polishes with a chamois
10 Zodiacal transition point
14 Wise to the jive
17 Coin for Trevi
18 Portugal's second city
20 Scratched the soil
22 Part of the psyche
23 What do anarchists try to do?
26 Tibetan ox
27 Memorable sportscaster
28 —— directed (medication advice)
29 Go before
31 Notorious fiddler
32 Physics unit
34 Result of corrosion
36 Garlic-eater's problem
37 What do dieters practice?
41 Eden exile
44 Heavy coffee cup
47 Take care of
48 Dilute
49 Piece of chinaware
50 Simpson trial judge
51 Recyclable item
52 —— majesté
54 Financial subj.
56 Adult pullet
57 Ankles, to M.D.'s
59 "—— a Grecian Urn"
62 Longfellow's bell town
63 Showed the way
64 Why was the old rooster silent?
69 Salt, chemically
70 Mafia chief
71 Liposuction target
72 Between L and Q
74 Who danced in a British courtroom?
80 Transmit Morse code
83 1968 Nobelist Onsager
84 Step part
85 Below: poetic
86 Inventor Whitney
87 Whichever
88 —— de Triomphe
90 Exit sign
92 Caldwell or Akins
93 Desert prince
95 Neighbor of Saudi Arabia
97 Bridge-tournament positions
100 Michigan's Arbor
101 Big name in comedy
102 What does a chaplain wear?
105 Hair fixatives
107 Gershwin biographer
108 Ocean abbr.
109 Hourglass contents
113 Bedsheet material
116 Kin of the birch
118 Cake experts
120 M-G-M's lion
121 What is said at dirty bars?
125 Burmese statesman
126 Bowling-alley button
127 Less of a struggle
128 Microwave device
129 Shortchange
130 Soccer great
131 High-I.Q. group
132 Sad sack

DOWN
1 A Baldwin
2 North-South line locator, with Mason
3 Got up
4 More uncommon
5 Seethe
6 Feelings of euphoria
7 No friend
8 Loaded (with)
9 Erwin and Udall
10 —— finish line (end the race)
11 Defunct Nasser merger: abbr.
12 Omit
13 Londoner's gasoline
14 How did the "Kon-Tiki" author greet a girl?
15 Relative of zounds!
16 Jab
19 Alamogordo's county
21 Hid the gray
24 Plumbing woe
25 A ghost does it
30 Furnace fodder
32 Heretofore
33 AAA mapping: abbr.
35 Numerical prefix
38 "This —— stickup"
39 Perfumer's product
40 "It takes —— know . . ."
42 Suit to ——
43 Darn that sock
44 Baseball glove
45 D-day landing beach
46 Colleague of Culbertson
49 Profoundly moving
51 Round
53 The queen's lang.
55 Bread bit
58 Surgery evidence
60 Monkeyshines
61 Hydroxyl compound
62 —— drop of a hat
65 "—— River" ("Show Boat" tune)
66 Commissioned serviceman
67 Does lacework
68 Cavity
73 Tollbooth site
75 Richard of "The Wiz"
76 Hockey MVP of the '70s
77 Amatory
78 School on the Thames
79 Now's antithesis
80 Come down in buckets
81 Soprano Gluck
82 What are stevedores?
88 Ravage
89 Sainted Archbishop of Canterbury
91 West Coast coll.
94 Office VIP
96 Marseilles Mrs.
98 Notify
99 Patty Hearst kidnappers' org.
102 In dreamland
103 Not warranted
104 One of Isaac's twins
106 "Waiting for Godot" star
110 Ohio tire city
111 Gumption
112 Washday appliance
113 Socket insert
114 Start of a choosing chant
115 Dialect in Dublin
117 Rival of Gouda
118 Half a Polynesian island
119 Dispatch
122 Snakelike fish
123 Diarist Anaïs
124 Toady's pet word



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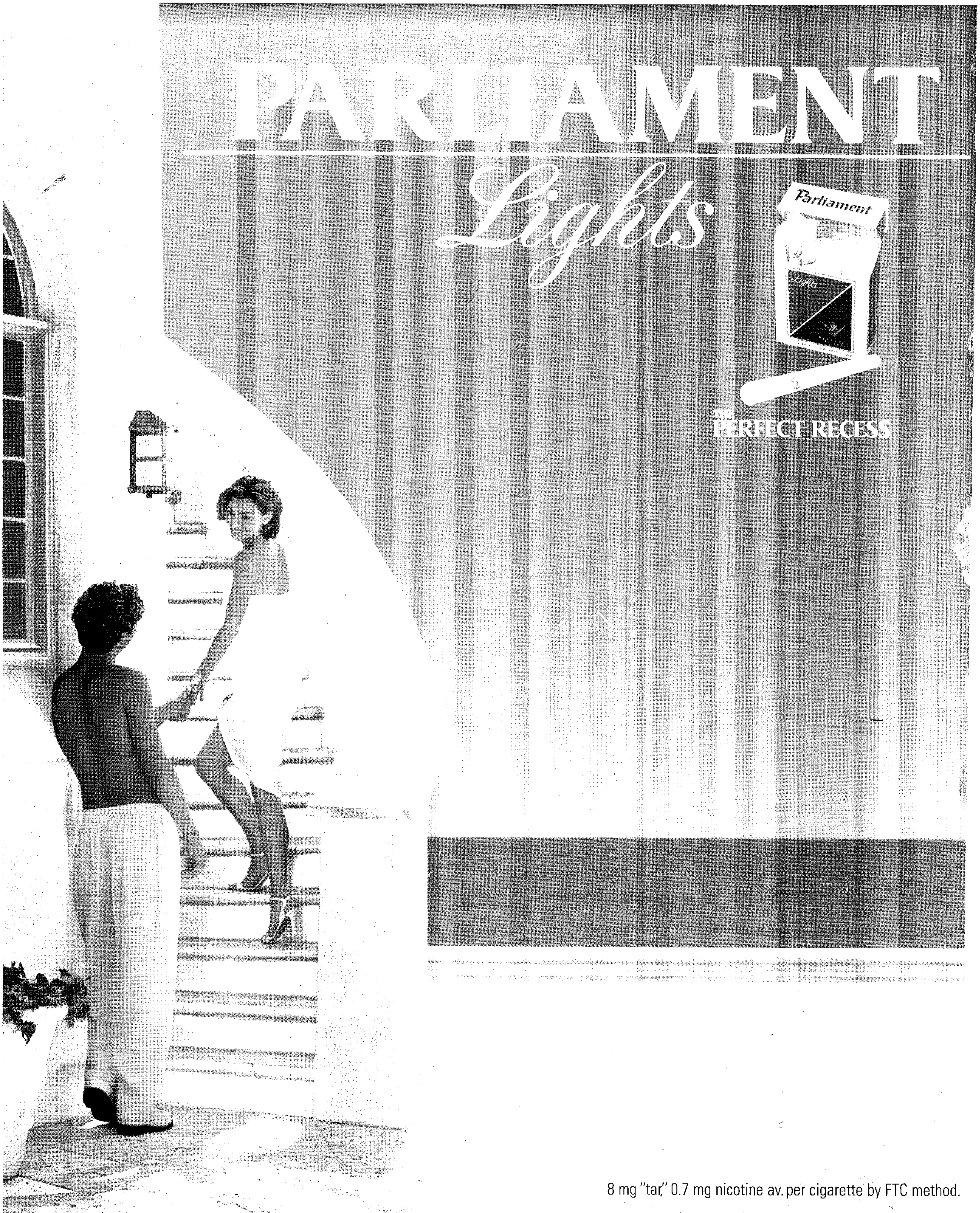
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